

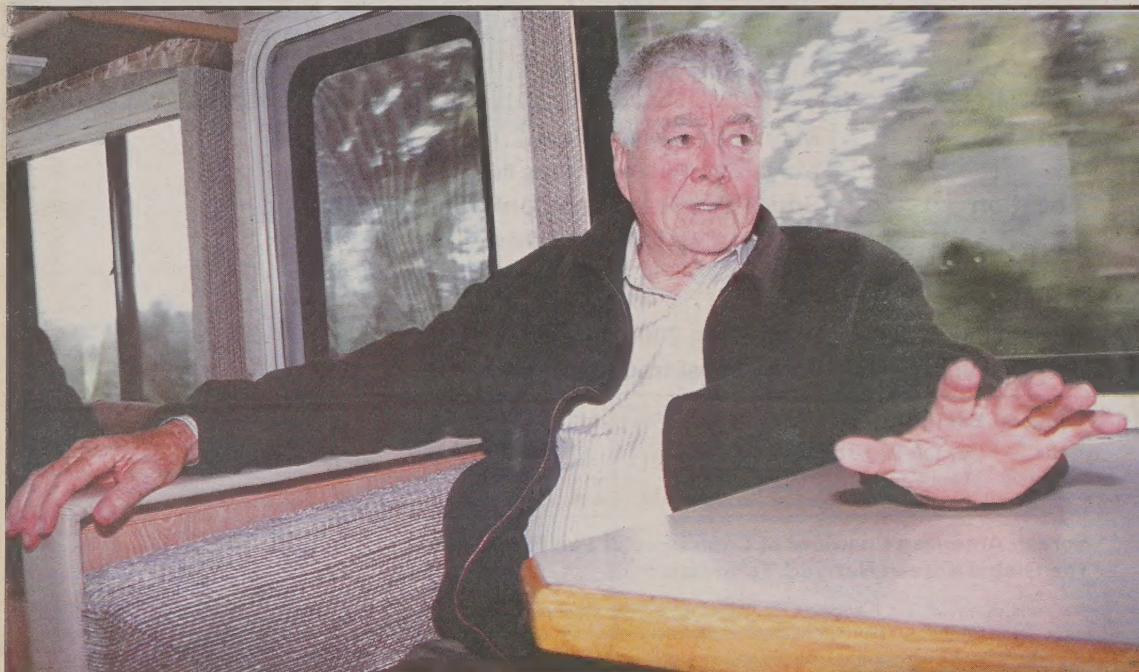
Shop local and save the economy: Our annual Small Business Awards p20

The mediocrity of celebrity, weird Californians, and a kinky commander in chief. In *Lit*

Inside: International Beer Festival program guide

GUARDIAN

APRIL 26-MAY 2, 2006 CELEBRATING 40 YEARS THE SAN FRANCISCO BAY GUARDIAN VOL. 40, NO. 30 • FREE



McCloskey's revolt

An antiwar, pro-choice environmentalist is trying to unseat the worst member of Congress in Northern California. And they're both Republicans. By Tim Kingston p16

Pete McCloskey, the firebrand former Congress member from San Mateo, discusses his underdog challenge to incumbent Richard Pombo from his mobile headquarters in a Winnebago. | GUARDIAN PHOTO BY JANE PHILOMEN CLELAND

EDITOR'S NOTES

By Tim Redmond
> tredmond@sfbg.com

I've been having mixed feelings about this Matt Gonzalez for Congress thing. I mean, I was one of the first people to start talking (more than a year ago) about how Gonzalez ought to challenge Nancy Pelosi: Despite all the accolades she gets as the first woman minority leader and potentially the first woman speaker of the house, Pelosi is a terrible politician. She's venal, driven by campaign money, and has no real agenda except power. She's the one who privatized the Presidio, potentially paving the way for the privatization of millions of acres of national parkland. And as the representative of one of the most liberal districts in the country, it took her forever to even sort of come out against the war.

My original thought was that Pelosi has never been held accountable for her actions, and a good solid challenge from the left would force her to come back and actually campaign. She'd have to face her constituents, answer some questions — and possibly even move a bit in the direction of the district on some key issues.

Besides, it would send a lovely shock wave through the local Democratic Party, where a significant number of local leaders privately

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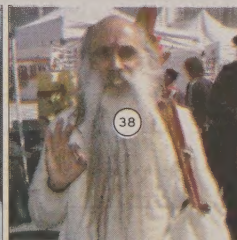
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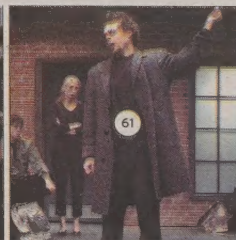
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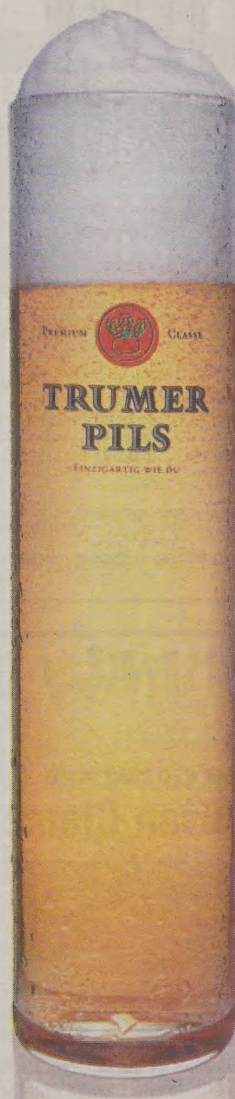
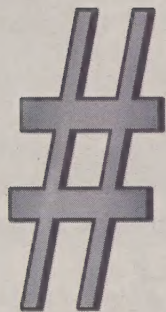


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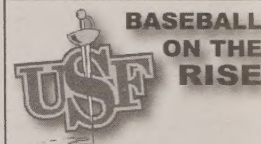
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EDITOR'S NOTES

CONT'D
despise Pelosi, but would be pressured by the national heavies to endorse her. We could see who really has political courage in this town.

Of course, there's a serious downside to all of this. Progressive San Francisco is in a somewhat precarious state right now: We have nobody who looks like a mayoral candidate, and the coalition that came together around the Gonzalez mayoral campaign was always fragile anyway. A major congressional campaign by the Greens right now — with the battle to oust the Republicans from the House in full swing — would create a lot of bitter feelings, and the fact that a guy was taking on a nationally prominent woman wouldn't make it any better.

Still, there will always be those issues, and you can always argue that it's not the right time to do something bold and dramatic, and the Green Party has as much right as anyone to run a strong candidate for Congress. A couple of months ago, I was still open to it.

And then it got to be April, and the filing deadline passed, and frankly, I didn't get the sense Gonzalez was that eager. Now some of his allies are pushing him to mount a write-in campaign for the Green Party nomination — and frankly, with all due respect, the whole thing has a sort of last-minute, half-assed look to it.

So I called Gonzalez this week to bat things around, and it turns out he's in almost exactly the same place I am. You want to run for the US Congress against a nine-term incumbent, you have to start early, take it seriously, raise a bunch of money, deal with the problems head-on ... and frankly, that's not where we are right now. "If it was a year ago, I might be thinking different," Gonzalez told me.

So I think he'll pass this time, and I think that's right. But that's not the end of the story. As he pointed out, if the Democrats do retake Congress, they'll probably turn out to be a disappointment on about a hundred levels, and even more power will even further corrupt Pelosi. And if we start thinking about it early enough, 2008 could be a fine year. **SFBG**

THIS MODERN WORLD

by TOM TOMORROW

OUR LONG NATIONAL NIGHTMARE

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--AND NOW IT'S ABOUT TO DEVOLVE INTO A FULL-BLOWN CIVIL WAR--

TELL ME THIS ISN'T HAPPENING--!

6 00

WHA--? OH--JUST A DREAM...JUST A TERRIBLE DREAM...

6 00

BUT--WAIT A MINUTE! IT'S ALL TRUE! AND NOT ONLY THAT--

6 00

--THE SAME CRETINS ARE NOW LAYING THE GROUNDWORK FOR WAR WITH IRAN--

--AND THIS TIME, THEY'RE THINKING ABOUT USING NUKES!

TELL ME THIS ISN'T HAPPENING--!

6 00

WHA--? OH--JUST A DREAM... BUT--WAIT! IT'S ALL TRUE!

AND NOT ONLY THAT--

6 00

TO BE CONTINUED...INDEFINITELY...

The questions Fiona ducked

EDITORIAL Sup. Fiona Ma last week decided not to show up for an endorsement interview that she scheduled with the *Guardian*. As Steven T. Jones explains on page 10, we were a bit frustrated — we had a few things to ask her.

So we've decided to run a list of the questions that she ducked; the full list is online at www.sfbg.com. Here are two key examples:

1. What kind of health care system do you support for California?

Ma's opponent, Janet Reilly, has made single-payer health care her top campaign priority and has issued a detailed plan for what that would entail. Health care is one of just five issues that Ma discusses on her Web site (the others being housing, education, budget/jobs, and transportation), and she vaguely indicates that she supports universal

coverage: "I support state measures to provide incentives for business owners to cover their workers and other such efforts, but we need the political will on the national level to be successful." The first part sounds as if she's advocating tax breaks to businesses that offer private insurance health plans to their employees. The caveat at the end sounds like she intends to do nothing until the feds move first.

But then, during the only debate that she'd agreed to have with Reilly, Ma said that she supports a single-payer health care system, without offering any other details. Which is it, supervisor?

2. What will you do to protect renters and rental units in San Francisco?

Ma has made no secret of her strong support for increasing home owner-

ship opportunities, and she has a record of opposing local efforts to slow the number of Ellis Act evictions. But at the debate she went further by declaring: "The Ellis Act is sometimes the only way for some people to become home owners, and I support it."

After being criticized for the statement, she defended herself in a piece on *BeyondChron.org* that only seemed to dig a deeper hole, arguing that "ownership units [should be] affordable to San Franciscans of all income levels."

And exactly how is someone who sides consistently with landlords and developers ever going to pull that off? **SFBG**

A strong small-business agenda

EDITORIAL You read the academic journals these days, or peruse economic development Web sites, and everyone seems to be talking about sustainable urban economics. It's as if the mantra that was first put forward by Jane Jacobs, David Morris, and a few others a quarter century ago is very much in the mainstream today: Cities function best with diverse economies dominated by locally owned businesses, with money circulating within the community. Cutting-edge restaurants talk about serving locally grown food. Beverage savants want local beer and wine. Just about everyone — including the mayor and the San Francisco Chamber of Commerce — wants to participate in a program called Shop Local.

It's a wonderful, encouraging trend — but if it's going to make any real difference in this city, it has to become a lot more than lip service. Consider:

- Just as Mayor Newsom was proudly signing on to a Shop San Francisco program, the mayor and the supervisors were busy approving plans to allow Home Depot — an anticompetitive out-of-town corporation that destroys local small business and undermines the entire concept of a strong local economy — to build a giant store on Bayshore Boulevard.

- It's taken legal action by Sue Hestor and the neighborhood leaders to derail (for now) the mayor's plans to build high-end condos all over the eastern neighborhoods — threatening hundreds of locally owned businesses.

- Downtown business leaders and the groups they fund still push for policies that hurt most of the businesses in the city — and too many small-business people still go along.

Here's the reality: Supporting small businesses — and moving San Francisco toward a sustainable economy — requires a lot more than a slogan. The people who are behind the Shop Local movement know that.

CONTINUES ON PAGE 6»



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SMALL BUSINESS

CONT.

They're promoting a wide range of national and local policies designed to change not only attitudes but the direction of public policy.

San Francisco, a progressive city known for its wonderful, lively, unique neighborhoods, ought to be a national leader in the battle. But others (Philadelphia, for example) are moving way ahead. This city is still stuck in an ancient (and regressive) economic mind-set.

There are a number of key things the city can do to turn that around and become a truly small-business-friendly place — and most of them go far beyond public-relations efforts and cutting through red tape. The basic approach to policy needs to change; here are a few ways to start:

- Stop allowing big chains to come into town. That's not exactly rocket science, and it isn't so hard either: Hayes Valley and North Beach both have "formula retail" laws that restrict the chains, and there's talk of doing the same in Potrero Hill. But why does this have to be fought block by block? Why not a citywide ordinance that protects every neighborhood commercial district — and, more important, keeps the life-sucking big-box giants away from the city altogether?

- Make small, locally owned businesses part of the planning process. The city's own (limited) studies have made clear that the type of development the mayor and the current city planning leadership has in mind would damage local businesses, particularly in the repair, distribution, and small manufacturing areas. That alone ought to be grounds to change directions. Why not a checklist for every new project that includes the question: Will this displace existing locally owned businesses? If the answer is yes, the project should be rejected.

- Take progressive business taxes seriously. There's almost certainly going to be an effort this fall to change the city's business-tax structure, with one of the goals being an increase in overall revenue. That's great, and it ought to happen — but the tax rates have to be shifted too, so that a tiny local retail outlet doesn't pay the same amount as the Gap. (Socking big-box outlets with a special tax or fee — possibly based on the fact that they are by nature car-driven operations — might be a nice way to bring in some cash.)

You can't be friendly to small local businesses these days without taking sides in the national economic war — and that means coming out against the big chains. Until San Francisco does that, all the talk of supporting local merchants will amount to nothing. **BYFC**

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Save John Swett!

OPINION In seeking to close the John Swett Alternative Elementary School in San Francisco's Western Addition, the San Francisco Unified School District is making a gargantuan mistake.

We knew from the start of the evaluation process that John Swett didn't come close to qualifying for closure or merger. By the board's own criteria, Swett shouldn't have been a candidate. Yet it remained, inexplicably, on the closure list.

Only now, through our own research and public records requests we made to the school district, has the rationale for the school's closure become clear: It's not an educational decision made in the best interests of students. It's a property decision made in the best interests of administrators. Situated just two blocks from the SFUSD's headquarters at 555 Franklin St., John Swett has apparently struck some administrators as an attractive target for expanding administrative offices.

Long before the unhappy coincidence of its proximity to SFUSD headquarters potentially doomed its existence, John Swett was rapidly

becoming a poster child for public schools in working-class minority communities. It offers the only arts program of its kind in the district and has provided opportunities for cultural enrichment to a population to whom far too many opportunities are routinely denied. Its enrollment of 240 students was quickly approaching the facility's full 280-student capacity, with a population reflecting the rich, diverse mosaic of San Francisco: 43 percent African American, 31 percent Pacific Islander, 14 percent Latino, and the remainder an integrated mix of whites, Asians, and others. And more curiously, if the issue at Swett was really about enrollment, the district could have looked across the street to reconcile any shortfall: Tenderloin Community School's population is at 120 percent.

Sup. Chris Daly and I have worked hard to galvanize as much support as possible within City Hall to make the school board's decision to save the school for students an easy one. We secured passage of an ordinance to provide \$660,000 from city funds to gain John Swett a reprieve.

For neighborhoods like the Western Addition and Tenderloin, plagued by the interrelated problems of joblessness, drugs, truancy, and gun violence, the decision seems utterly counterproductive. What good are violence-prevention strategies when they are subverted by actions like shutting down John Swett School?

This battle is about setting the right priorities. It's time to put the students first. The plain fact is that kids from minority working-class communities need good schools that are already intact more than school bureaucrats need adjacent facilities for themselves or a half-baked plan for something else. An innocent school has been unjustly condemned. Its execution is set to go. There are moments until midnight. Can we save it? **SFBG**

Ross Mirkarimi

Sup. Ross Mirkarimi represents District 5.

SEND YOUR LETTERS TO:
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LETTERS

IT'S NOT JUST JOE

The *Guardian* is correct in that there is no place for transphobia or hatred against any group in San Francisco politics [Editor's Notes, 4/19/06]. Joe O'Donoghue's transphobic poem attacking Robert Haaland, one in a series of offensive odes directed at his enemy of the day, is rightly and roundly condemned.

The poem was a foul play in the Proposition D campaign [Laguna Honda], of which Haaland is an active opponent. Barnes, Mosher, Whitehurst and Lauter [BMW] is the political consultant firm working the No on D campaign, which has the financial support of the Chamber of Commerce, SFSOS, and the Committee on JOBS, as well as Haaland's SEIU local 790 union.

The astute reader might recall that BMW (prior to Sam Lauter joining the consultancy) coalesced around the multimillion-dollar soft-money campaign that defeated Tom Ammiano in 1999, a campaign that Haaland managed with a spectacular write-in victory.

But during that campaign, the late Robert Barnes was accused of using homophobic tactics in these pages ["Election Doublespeak Is Veiled Homophobia," 11/24/99]. I stood with Tom in that race and was disgusted with BMW's conduct as I am disgusted with O'Donoghue's.

But how can we take calls for shunning O'Donoghue for his blatant transphobia seriously when those calling for excommunication are embracing those who were blatantly homophobic against Tom Ammiano not so long ago?

Marc Salomon
San Francisco

BY AND LARGE, THINGS SUCK

It might have been worth mentioning in Katie Kurtz's review of the current Whitney Biennial ["Reverse Rapture," 3/29/06] that the show's last incarnation, in 2004, was largely devoid of references to our fraught political moment and the overall impression was one of pervasive navel-gazing and profound denial. Successful or not, this year's curators clearly offer their thesis in part

CONTINUES ON PAGE 8»

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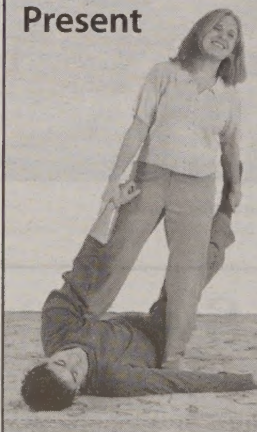
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as a corrective to a previous show that seemed out of sync with the times.

To Kurtz's dismay, she finds in this year's biennial evidence of an artistic landscape that portrays "an American identity that is paranoid, strewn with garbage, and formed in reaction to disasters." Call me crazy, but from where I stand, this is a not an unreasonable or inaccurate description of the contemporary American situation.

"What if [the curators/the artists] had gone looking for occurrences of abundance and optimism?" she asks.

But whose interests are served by choosing this narrative over another? For whom does the world offer abundance and reasons to feel optimistic? By and large, things suck for a majority of people right now, and let's not pretend they don't.

Jill Dawsey
San Francisco

DOOMSDAY FOR BAYVIEW-HP

Doomsday is looming. The redevelopment plan to repeople Bayview-Hunters Point passed by the Board of Supervisors Land Use Committee Wednesday, April 19, will be heard by the Finance Committee this coming Wednesday, April 26, at 1 p.m., and, if passed, will go straight to the full board.

Help! If approved, this will be an even bigger land grab than New Orleans's Ninth Ward, sacrificing more than 30,000 people of color for a 49ers stadium with Lennar condos on the side... or a Home Depot... or million-dollar condos for Mission Bay biotechies... or who knows what.

We need your help! Opposition is solid here in Bayview-Hunters Point (except for a few confused or sold-out souls), and cries of outrage — especially from *Guardian* readers — can be heard all over town, except in City Hall, where Chris Daly is our only friend.

Mary Ratcliff
San Francisco

FOR THE RECORD

Due to an editing error, the April 19 edition of "Sonic Reducer" ran an incorrect name and title of a Mugison CD. The artist name is Mugison, and the album title is *Mugimama — Is This Monkey Music?*

The *Guardian* welcomes letters commenting on our coverage or other topics of local interest. Letters should be brief (we reserve the right to edit them for length) and signed. Please include a daytime telephone number for verification.

Corrections and clarifications: The *Guardian* tries to report news fairly and accurately. You are invited to complain to us when you think we have fallen short of that objective. Complaints should be directed to Pamela Pritchard, the assistant to the publisher. We'd prefer them in writing, but Pritchard can also be reached by phone at (415) 255-3100. If we have published a misstatement, we will endeavor to correct it quickly and in an appropriate place in the newspaper. If you remain dissatisfied, we invite you to contact the Minnesota News Council, an impartial organization that hears and considers complaints against news media. It can be reached at 12 South Sixth St., Suite 1122, Minneapolis, MN 55402; (612) 341-9357; fax (612) 341-9358.

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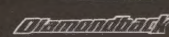
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Where's Ma?

Regular readers of this paper know that we've had some issues with Fiona Ma, the supervisor now running for the California Assembly. She's been a consistent vote for downtown interests, has made icky and impolitic statements before groups like SFSOS and the San Francisco Chamber of Commerce, and regularly demonstrates an appalling ignorance of the issues and how government works (unlike her even more conservative colleague Sup. Sean Elsbernd, whose intelligence we and others respect).

So it's not surprising that Ma was nervous about facing the *Guardian's* editorial board for the April 19 endorsement interview that her campaign scheduled for 10 a.m. What was surprising is that she didn't show up or even call us, instead having her campaign manager, Tom Hsieh, fax over a terse statement the evening before.

"Supervisor Fiona Ma will not be seeking the *Bay Guardian* endorsement and will not attend the interview scheduled for April 19, 2006. The supervisor appreciates your previous support for her candidacy in 2002, but at this time doesn't not feel inclined to pursue your endorsement for the State Assembly," it read in its entirety.

Her decision is almost unprecedented, with only a few major San Francisco political candidates in the last 25 years refusing to talk to us (and the first we can remember to set up an interview, then cancel by fax at the last minute). But it wasn't

the personal snub that bothers us. We explained to Hsieh that it's not about the *Guardian* or our endorsement but whether a public official seeking even higher office was willing to be accountable to the tens of thousands of citizens and voters that our readership represents.

After all, we were far harder on Mayor Gavin Newsom before his 2003 election than we have been on Ma, yet Newsom still came in for his endorsement interview (telling us in the beginning that he knew we wouldn't endorse him, but he felt obliged to meet with us anyway), held his own, and left with our respect.

And we had many important questions to ask Ma, questions her constituents have a right to demand answers to. There are glaring contradictions in her statements on health care and housing policies, making it unclear what she supports. We have questions about her voting record and deceptive statements that she's made about it. And we wanted to know whether she has any concerns about the agenda being pushed by some of her financial backers, including Gap founder Don Fisher, prominent developers, and the San Francisco Apartment Association.

But since Ma won't directly answer our questions, we told Hsieh that we would have to just put them out there publicly and encourage our readers to demand answers to questions that go to the heart of what Ma stands for and how she intends to represent San Francisco in the

legislature. Please go to www.sfbg.com to read our questions, which we will update occasionally until the June primary election or until Ma addresses them publicly. (Steven T. Jones)

You be the judge

Incumbency is gold on the campaign trail. And Lillian Sing, with no hesitation, listed her occupation as "judge" when she filed as a contender in the race for a San Francisco Superior Court seat against local attorney Eric Saffire.

But Sing has actually been retired from the bench for almost two years.

One voter, Joyce Gisler, cried foul April 20 by filing suit and asking for a temporary restraining order against the San Francisco Department of Elections, arguing that since Sing isn't a judge right now, she can't exploit the designation on a ballot.

"There's no doubt that Lillian Sing's ballot designation as judge will mislead voters into thinking she's an incumbent," Enrique Pearce, Saffire's campaign manager, said.

A judge nonetheless tossed out the attempted restraining order on Monday due to a technicality: A 10-day window to challenge wording on the ballot had passed by the time the complaint was filed.

Sing dismisses the argument, saying she was working part-time, out of retirement, and on an assignment basis when her candidacy was filed.

"It's the same position as the judge who heard the case today," Sing told us. (G.W. Schulz)



Gubernatorial candidate Phil Angelides promised "California will once again be in the front ranks of progressive vision and action"

April 19 during a San Francisco fundraiser, where he appeared with his campaign cochair, US Sen. Barbara Boxer and Rep. Nancy Pelosi.

Angelides promised more money for schools and said, "I'll tell you right now, I'm going to ask the most fortunate to pay for some of that."

PHOTO BY TIM DAW



WEB SITE OF THE WEEK

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"When you get your shoes checked at the airport, some people see that as something that makes them feel safe, and some people see it as a reminder of the world we live in."

Nate Levine

ALERTS

ALERTS

By Deborah Giattina
> alerts@sfbg.com

WEDNESDAY, APRIL 26

Challenge 2006 candidates

Get answers on key issues from California State Assembly District 16 and the Alameda County Board of Supervisors District 3 candidates in a discussion hosted by the League of Women Voters in Oakland.
6 p.m.
Oakland City Hall
1 Frank Ogawa Plaza, Oakl.
(510) 339-1994, peggylowndes@yahoo.com

THURSDAY, APRIL 27

Explore science through art

Join Rabbi Michael Lerner (editor of *Tikkun*), Professor Steve Palumbi (of Stanford University), and Meredith Tromble (of the art Web site *Stretch.org*) for a discussion about choreographer Liz Lerman's *Ferocious Beauty* dance piece and how science and art interact in modern society.
6:30 p.m.
Verba Buena Center for the Arts Forum
701 Mission, SF
(415) 978-2700, alee@ybca.org

MONDAY, MAY 1

May Day immigrant rally

Join immigrant workers at a rally and march to Civic Center to protest legislation being considered by Congress that could criminalize undocumented workers and their employers. At the end of the day, attend a second rally calling for "a no business as usual" day boycotting work, school, and commerce.
First rally and march, 11 a.m.
Justin Herman Plaza
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Bunkering down

Jewish community groups get government help to fight terror

By G.W. Schulz

> gwschulz@sfbg.com

Nate Levine is proud of the work his organization has done to mend the often tense relationship between Christianity, Islam, and Judaism.

Levine is the executive director of the Jewish Community Center of San Francisco (JCC), located at California Street and Presidio Avenue. Prominently displayed in his office is a framed photo depicting the son of a local Muslim imam touching a verse from the Torah that's spelled out in block letters on a wall of the center's lobby.

But that doesn't change the fact that the center must still screen cars in the parking lot and maintain a security detail during business hours. Levine's group even felt compelled to ask the federal government for \$100,000, not for stockpiling first aid, food, and water supplies to assist victims in the event of a disaster, but to increase the center's already beefed-up security measures for the purposes of defending against a potential terrorist attack.

Despite Levine's best efforts to defy any forms of religious intolerance, and despite the cost of incessant fear, the center is in some senses a daily reminder to him of just how vulnerable to attack a lot of people continue to feel.

The JCC was awarded \$97,050 in homeland security funding in December to purchase, among other things, security monitoring stations,

cameras, motion detectors, and "mirrors for under-vehicle searches and handheld metal detectors," according to state documents obtained by the *Guardian* through a records request.

"When you get your shoes checked at the airport, some people see that as something that makes them feel safe, and some people see it as a reminder of the world we live in," Levine recently told us.

Six Jewish nonprofit organizations in the Bay Area received a total of \$541,000 in December to increase security at their facilities. The state of California received \$5.1 million in grants during the 2005 fiscal year exclusively for nonprofit groups considered to be at risk of a terror attack. Forty-six nonprofit groups in Los Angeles, many Jewish, received a total of \$3.8 million in December, while six groups in San Diego received about \$321,000. Each group is permitted \$100,000 at most.

Congregation Emanu-El, housed in an enormous 45,000-square-foot Spanish colonial-style synagogue near Sacramento Street and Arguello Boulevard, was awarded \$88,000 to install a walk-through metal-detector system and additional bollards, or short, concrete-and-steel columns that prevent would-be attackers from driving onto the sidewalk.

"We're very much aware of the health and safety of our members," Gary Cohn, executive director of



Congregation Emanu-El received \$88,000 in money from the feds to beef up security. | GUARDIAN PHOTO BY CHARLES RUSSO

Emanu-El, said. "We are on a regular basis consulted by law enforcement when they want us to be a little more diligent than usual."

The Jewish Community Federation of San Francisco was given \$100,000 to install "ballistic- and blast-resistant glass and [an] electronic locking system," according to state records. The North Peninsula Jewish Campus in Foster City was given \$99,000.

Several of the organizations statewide are sizable nonprofits with annual budgets of sometimes tens of millions of dollars, and \$100,000 for some of them is small change. But the money reflects an ongoing and costly paranoia that still pervades the United States.

Levine of the Jewish Community Center hesitated to disclose whether the group had recently experienced any threats. But he did say the

\$97,050 in grant money the center received was a "fraction" of what it spent annually on security. FBI hate-crime statistics from 2003 describe Jewish groups as the most likely to face a bias incident; Islamic groups are second most likely. Many Jewish organizations were conscious of security issues before Sept. 11.

"Synagogues in general have always been concerned about terror attacks," Cohn said.

By the end of this fiscal year, Congress will have allotted \$50 million over a two-year period to nonprofits across the United States for security.

Cohn insists the added precautions are best for his congregation.

"I think it makes them feel more secure," he said. "That's very comforting to people when they come here." SFBG



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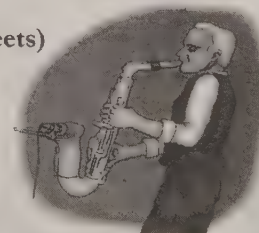
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Drugs of choice

Why some former cops argue that all drugs — not just pot — should be legal

By Steven T. Jones
 > steve@sfbg.com

San Francisco is home to a wide variety of drug users, from the hardcore smack addicts on Sixth Street to the club kids high on ecstasy or crystal meth to the yuppies snorting lines off their downtown desks or getting drunk after work to the cornucopia of people across all classes smoking joints in Golden Gate Park or in their living rooms on weekends.

Drug law reformers come in similarly wide varieties, but most have a strong preference for first legalizing the most popular and least harmful of illegal drugs: marijuana. That's how medical marijuana got its quasi-legal status in the city, and why San Francisco hosted the huge state conference of California National Organization for the Reform of Marijuana Laws confer-

ence that began on 4/20.

But while hundreds of CA-NORML attendees were eating lunch and waiting to be entertained by iconic marijuana advocate Tommy Chong (a session that was cut short by a hotel manager because too many attendees were smoking pot; go to "The Day after 4/20" at www.sfbg.com/entry.php?entry_id=392 for the complete story), across town another unlikely legalization proponent was speaking to a circle of about two dozen people gathered in the Mission Neighborhood Health Center.

Norm Stamper, the former Seattle police chief and a cop for 34 years, is a member of Law Enforcement Against Prohibition, a group of current and former police

officers advocating for the legalization and regulation of all drugs (go to www.leap.cc for more info). Although Stamper also spoke at some NORML conference events, he differs from that organization in at least one key respect.

"Tomorrow I'm going to say something that will piss off NORML," Stamper told the group in the Mission District April 21. Namely, Stamper argues that it is more important to legalize hard drugs like cocaine, heroin, and methamphetamines than the more benign marijuana.

While NORML focuses on personal freedom and the fact that marijuana is less harmful than legal drugs like alcohol and tobacco, Stamper blames drug prohibition for the more serious public health and economic costs associated with harder drugs. In particular, prohibition hinders addiction treatment and quality control of drugs — both of which can have deadly results.

"I do think drugs should be rigorously regulated and controlled," Stamper argued, noting that there are many different visions for the postprohibition world even within his own organization. Stamper

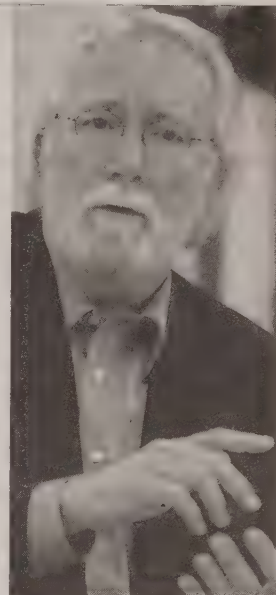
prefers a model in which all drugs are legalized, production and distribution systems are tightly controlled by the government (as they are now with alcohol and tobacco), addiction issues are treated as medical problems, and crimes associated with such addictions — such as theft or spousal abuse — are treated harshly.

But he also said that he's open to other ideas and definitely shares the widely held view among drug-law reformers of all stripes that the \$1 trillion "war on drugs," instigated in 1970 by then-president Richard Nixon, has been a colossal failure and an unnecessary waste of human and economic capital.

"We should have created a public health model rather than a war model in dealing with drugs," he said. "Whatever I choose to put in this body is my business, not the government's business."

And that's one area in which Stamper would agree with Chong, who sang the praises of his favorite drug to a packed auditorium: "There's no such thing as pot-fueled rage, is there?" **SFBG**

See "Students, Drugs, and a Law of Intended Consequences" on page 15.

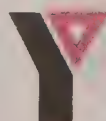


Former Seattle police chief Norm Stamper, a member of Law Enforcement Against Prohibition, speaks to a gathering at the Mission Neighborhood Health Center.

GUARDIAN PHOTO BY CHARLES RUSSO



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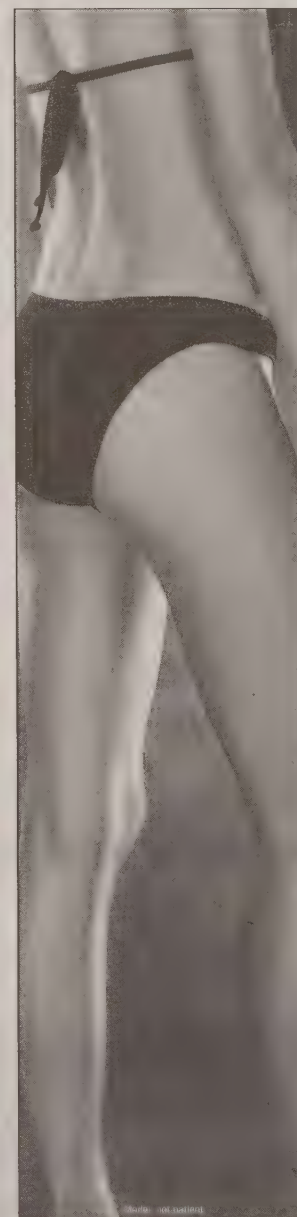


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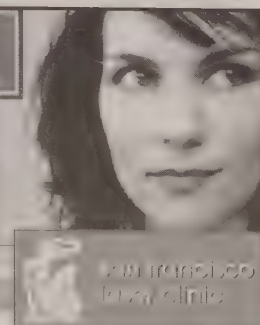
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Students, drugs, and a law of intended consequences

A few weeks before Marisa Garcia started her first semester of college in 2000, a cop found a pipe with marijuana residue in her car. The pipe was hers, so she fessed up, went to court, paid her fine, and thought the case was closed.

Soon after, Garcia, the daughter of a single mother with three other college-age children, lost the financial aid she'd been counting on to cover her tuition costs at Cal State Fullerton. She called her school and found out it was because of the drug charge. The Higher Education Act makes students with a drug conviction ineligible for financial aid. Garcia had never heard of the law before.

She's not alone in her predicament. A study by the reform group Students for Sensible Drug Policy, released April 17, found that more than 180,000 students have lost or been denied financial aid under this law since it went into effect in 2000. California has had the highest number of students affected: a startling 31,000. The group hopes the overall numbers will spur Congress to repeal the law.

The law is intended to be a deterrent to drug use, but critics question its effectiveness. "Most people don't find out about it until it's too late," Tom Angell, campaign director for SSDP, said. "If kids are thinking about using drugs, they're supposed to say, 'No, I could lose my aid.' But not a lot of people know about it until they come across it on their financial aid form."

Since Garcia lost her aid, the act has been amended to apply only to students who get busted while receiving financial assistance. But that doesn't

fully address the concerns of its critics, who see it as counterproductive.

"[The law] affects the very students whom the Higher Education Act was intended to assist in the first place when it was passed in 1965: the students from low- and middle-income families, the ones who cannot afford college tuition on their own," Angell said. "These are the people who, when they get a conviction and lose their financial aid, are forced to drop out."

Critics also contend that those punished for using drugs shouldn't be penalized a second time for that same crime. "If you break the law, there is a system of justice that is designed to deal with you," said Tom Kaley, spokesperson for Rep. George Miller, the senior Democrat on the House Education Committee, who supports the repeal of the law. "But then to have the Department of Education add another punch on top of that sounds a lot like double jeopardy."

That issue and others prompted the SSDP and the American Civil Liberties Union to file a federal class-action lawsuit March 22 seeking to overturn the law. That suit, in combination with the study, seeks to highlight how damaging the law has been.

"Now all members of Congress know exactly how many of their own constituents are devastated by the policy," Angell said. "They're not going to be able to keep ignoring it year after year while tens of thousands of students lose financial aid. They're going to have to do something about it." (Hunter Jackson)

www.ssdp.org/lawsuit

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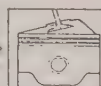
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The GOP's unlikely savior

An antiwar, pro-choice environmentalist is running against the worst member of Congress in Northern California. And they're both Republicans

By Tim Kingston
 > timk@sfbg.com

"Congressmen are like diapers: You need to change 'em often, and for the same reason."

Pete McCloskey uses the same opening gambit as he marches into a bar, a hair salon, and a half dozen other businesses in downtown Lodi, buttonholing voters in his long-shot bid to unseat incumbent Richard Pombo, the GOP powerhouse who represents the central valley and parts of Alameda and Santa Clara Counties.

This is not your typical Republican primary campaign.

McCloskey is a pro-choice, pro-environment, troops-out-of-Iraq, old-style moderate. In many ways he's more progressive than a lot of the people who currently run the Democratic Party.

At 78, McCloskey, who once represented Portola Valley, in San Mateo County, in Congress, is one of the last representatives of an increasingly scarce breed: the liberal Republican. His wing of the GOP, which once played a key role in American politics, has increasingly fallen victim to the religious right and the scorched-earth tactics of former Congressional leader Tom "the Hammer" Delay.

Pombo is the embodiment of the latter legacy. He's one of the most socially conservative, environmentally challenged, global warming-skeptical, pro-Alaska oil-drilling, antichoice, and antiegal representatives in the country. He has also been tagged as one of the nation's 13 least ethical Congress members by Citizens for Responsibility and Ethics in Washington, DC. He possesses a remarkably low 7 percent rating from the American Civil Liberties Union and is a noted associate of both Delay and Jack Abramoff. He's even given Delay's legal defense fund \$5,000 (see "Follow the Money," page 17).

It's hard to believe Pombo represents any part of the Bay Area. But his oddly gerrymandered 11th District is a safe Republican seat — and the only way to beat him, McCloskey says, is in a Republican primary.

"This is a battle for the soul of the Republican party," McCloskey says from a seat in his red, white, and blue Winnebago as we tear up and down Highway 99 through dark gray rain showers, bright green fields, and the muted beiges and browns of recently constructed subdivisions. "The basic reason I am running is to try and restore a reputation for honesty in the Republican Party in Congress. If I can't win on that issue, I don't deserve to win."

He's pushing the honesty-in-government theme hard: One flyer reads, "You Have a Choice," with pictures linking Pombo, Abramoff, and Delay.

Could this be a resurgence of the moderate wing of the party? Don't hold your breath: Hardly anyone outside of McCloskey's campaign thinks he can win. But in a year of political turmoil, odd things do happen.

The 11th Congressional District covers the central valley from Lodi in the north to the growing bedroom community of Tracy, east of Livermore, ranges over the East Bay hills to Danville and parts of Alameda, and sprawls down to Santa Clara County east of Santa Cruz. It's this sprawl that has caught the attention of Sam Rodriguez, political director of the California Democratic Party.

"There are very different kinds of Republican voters," Rodriguez says. "There are a large number of Republicans who have moved from the East Bay and want to own their own house. They... moved to Tracy and are fiscally conservative but socially moderate and are not accustomed to a Pombo my-way-or-the-highway attitude."

While McCloskey's politics may be moderate, he is anything but that in person. He has a powerful, gravelly voice — he sounds like William Burroughs on steroids — a shock of thick white hair, an ex-marines, ramrod-straight stance when talking to audiences, and a blunt, charismatic, if rather folksy presence. Sitting in his rolling campaign headquarters, McCloskey describes political campaigns as "organized grab-ass" and harasses Rob Caughlan, his campaign manager and the former president of the environmentalist Surf Rider Foundation, by christening him "the flak" and saying, "Did you *have* to wear your pimp tie today?"

McCloskey is built like the proverbial brick shit house. He charges through his campaign, regardless of whether he's sprawled across a couch in the mobile HQ, ordering Caughlan to do more press calls and improve a flyer, or asking where the advance man is at an event later that evening. Having spent decades in the area as a land-use litigator and conservation-easement proponent, McCloskey knows it like the back of his hand, so much so that as he was being interviewed in the RV belting down Highway 99, he was also giving directions to the next campaign stop.

He may look like a kindly, retired old uncle in photographs, but the guy has a steel spine. McCloskey was the very first Congress member — Republican or Democrat — to take a stand



Pete McCloskey: The salty ex-marine who wants Richard Pombo's congressional seat.

against the Vietnam War in 1969, when he called for the repeal of the Gulf of Tonkin Resolution. In 1973, McCloskey was the first member of either party to call for Richard M. Nixon's impeachment. He also took a moderate position on the Middle East, which earned him the undying enmity of the American Israel Public Affairs Committee. He helped engineer the first Earth Day and draft the Endangered Species Act — a law that, in McCloskey's view, Pombo has done his best to "gut."

McCloskey is hoping that disillusionment with the Republican Party can be channeled against Pombo — and he hopes he can convince locals that the incumbent is way out of touch.

"These two guys, Republican businessmen, they went to school with [Pombo] and are about his age," McCloskey says. "They said something has changed in Richard; he has gotten fat off all his money. He no longer thinks of us; he is working for himself. If there are many more people out there like that, [Pombo] may be in more trouble than he thinks."

But McCloskey is going to have to talk to an awful lot of people, over an awful lot of territory, to make any inroads: The last time Pombo was in a Republican primary, in 2002, he trounced his opponent with 87 percent of the vote.

And the entire effort raises an obvious question: Just what is McCloskey doing in a party that seems to have little use for moderates and less for liberals?

The query stops him dead in his tracks for a moment outside the Vintage Retirement Residence, a large, beige condolike complex on West Kettelman Lane in Lodi, where he has just spoken to 25 senior residents.

"I disagree with the leadership of the Republican Party," he says. "I joined the Republican Party in 1964. I was a civil rights activist... We were once the party of the balanced budget. We were the party of the environment. There are still a lot of good people in the party. Do you quit the party just because

you disagree with the leadership? I just say fuck 'em and fight."

One thing becomes clear after two days in the central valley with McCloskey: He makes a virtue of necessity. Instead of brick-and-mortar campaign offices he can't afford, he has the Winnebago. Instead of expensive TV ads, he relies on newspaper ads, free media coverage, and campaigning, campaigning, campaigning.

And it's a rather unconventional campaign. The staff consists of Caughlan, otherwise known as "Bird Legs"; a United Airlines pilot who favors right-hand turns off the freeway from the center lane; and Amanda Matthews, daughter of a local newspaper publisher. McCloskey loves the madness. He is equally comfortable, and shameless, charging into Peña's Super Mercado and prowling the aisles, asking customers if they're old enough to vote, chatting up Moose lodge members, chasing down voters in downtown Lodi, or asking Democrats to grab a voter registration form and change their affiliation to decline-to-state so they can vote in the Republican primary.

Whether racing around a district that covers 22 towns, four counties, and three mountain ranges or doing retail politics, McCloskey remains every inch the marine who stormed hills during the Korean War, winning two purple hearts. The man is the Energizer Bunny of politics. His vigor is equal to that of someone 30 years his junior. When the rest of his campaigners head home, McCloskey has been known to hit the bars — to campaign.

Pointing out the window as we roll south on 99, McCloskey indicates where \$600,000 houses that local residents can no longer afford are being built near emerald green farmland that he worries will be eaten up by urban sprawl. He favors paying stipends to farmers to keep their land as farmland, along with a strict urban-growth limit and a strict regulation of air quality to lower burgeoning asthma rates in the valley.



Richard Pombo has held his weirdly gerrymandered 11th Congressional District since 1992.

"Every time there is another development from Tracy to Lathrop to Manteca, Escalon, or Ripon, the quality of life is hurt and the air quality is diminished. All of this is Pombo," McCloskey says, looking out over the rain-soaked fields. "He wants to develop every acre of ground. . . . Instead of working on projects to ease the traffic or BART or the ACE train, he is working for more vehicles and more traffic. That is crazy."

If all politics is local, then land use — one of the top issues in the district — is a potentially decisive factor in the race. And you could not find two more different views. McCloskey is a strong believer in regulation, working with landowners and ranchers to conserve and preserve land, while Pombo has always styled himself as a protector of private property owners' land rights.

"He has made it clear that he is opposed to local authority," says Mike Connolly, the author of Tracy's Measure A, which restricts residential building permits and requires builders to also develop community infrastructure. Connolly says he wrote and eventually got the measure passed in response to what he called Pombo's general plan of unrestricted residential growth.

"We don't do development well," says Connolly, an independent leaning toward supporting Pombo. "We need greater funding for mass transit. We can add lanes to our freeways, one every year, and we will never catch up with residential growth."

Wayne Johnson, Pombo's campaign spokesperson, says that McCloskey's critique "is coming out of the 1970s paradigm, and the world has passed him by."

If you want to blame someone for the existence of Pombo in Congress, blame the Democrats who reappointed California and wanted to make sure that "blue dog" incumbents like Dennis Cardoza in the 18th District were safe. The 11th Congressional District is an ugly

thing, looking like a leaking custard pie with a stake in its heart. The stake is a series of urban, Democratic-leaning areas carved out of Pombo's district to benefit Cardoza or whoever succeeds him.

"The Democrats made an unholy bargain with the devil," McCloskey says, so now "the only way he can be beaten is in a Republican primary." But conventional wisdom in the valley also has it that McCloskey doesn't stand a snowball's chance in hell against Pombo, while his campaign has not endeared McCloskey to local Republican officials. "I see him as a 78-year-old carpetbagger from Yolo County," says San Joaquin County supervisor Leroy Omellas, also a founding member of a private property rights group called the San Joaquin County Citizens Land Alliance.

The charge has more than an element of truth. McCloskey did move down from Rumsey in Yolo County, where he owns an orange farm, to challenge Pombo. Prior to that, he'd lived in San Mateo, the district he represented in Congress.

And it's clear that most of McCloskey's financial support doesn't come from local Republicans. Johnson points out that McCloskey is getting just 3 percent of donations larger than \$200 from people with a history of giving to the Republican Party. "McCloskey is a stalking horse for the Democrats," the Pombo aide says. "His supporters are Howard Dean and John Kerry supporters."

Some Kerry backers have, indeed, given to McCloskey, who has forsworn political action committee money and lacks the \$2 million war chest Pombo has amassed. He has raised \$205,000 (\$50,000 of his own money), much of it in small donations.

And that makes some sense: McCloskey isn't just trying to woo the right. His strategy is to peel off disaffected Republicans and attract local Democrats willing to vote for him in the primary.

CONTINUES ON PAGE 18 >>

Follow the money

It's an old, old adage, but that doesn't make it any less true: Follow the money. And in Rep. Richard Pombo's case, that money leads to some very interesting places, such as Jack Abramoff, oil, and American Indians.

According to the nonpartisan Open Secrets Web site, which monitors campaign contributions, Pombo received some \$10,000 from the Keep Our Majority Political Action Committee, which is supported by disgraced lobbyist Abramoff. The one-time Capitol Hill power broker and now convicted felon is also one of the six top donors to Pombo's RICH Political Action Committee. Pombo has received more than \$500,000 in donations from Indian tribes, members, and lobbyists, despite the fact that there are no tribes in the 11th Congressional District.

But Abramoff and the Indian tribes are not the only people who directly or indirectly gave Pombo scads of cash. The two largest industrial contributors to Pombo are the agricultural and real estate sectors — which makes sense given that those are the dominant industries in his area — but his third largest source of campaign funds is the oil and gas industries, which have given him \$178,788 since 1989.

Pombo is chairman of the US House of Representatives Committee on Resources, which oversees those industries. Chevron Texaco alone gave him \$21,500. There are plenty of reasons for the oil giant to like Pombo: He opposed a Chinese bid to purchase UNOCAL — Chevron also wanted to buy UNOCAL — and he has pushed to lift the moratorium on oil drilling off the coast of California.

Early this year, investigative reporters with the *Los Angeles Times* uncovered two cases of what looks suspiciously like back-scratching between Pombo and extractive industries. In 1999 Pombo and Rep. John Doolittle (R–Roseville) linked up to put the kibosh on a Federal Deposit Insurance Corporation investigation of Charles Hurwitz, of Maxxam lumber clear-cutting infamy, over his involvement in a collapsed Texas savings and loan

company. According to the *LA Times*, the legislators, both known as "protégés of [Tom] Delay," subpoenaed documents from the confidential FDIC investigation of Hurwitz and promptly published them in the congressional record, stymieing the government's case. Hurwitz subsequently gave Pombo \$1,000 and Doolittle \$5,000.

Another *LA Times* article noted that just three months before Pombo inserted language into a budget bill — without debate or hearings — that would have opened public lands, including national forests, to mining operations, Washington, DC, lobbyist Duane Gibson organized a \$1,000-a-plate fundraiser for him in late 2005. Gibson is a former legal aide to Pombo's Committee on Resources, now under "scrutiny" in the Abramoff scandal. Several mining companies made contributions to the fundraiser.

In 2004 Pombo wrote a letter to then-secretary of the interior Gale Norton urging her to suspend environmental regulations that the wind-power industry opposed. He neglected to mention that his parents own a wind farm on the Altamont Pass, nor did he mention his own stake in his parents' operation.

Pombo, like many representatives both Democratic and Republican, believes in keeping it in the family. While not the worst of the lot, he has paid out \$357,325 to his wife and brother for bookkeeping, fundraising, consulting, and other services related to his political activities. This is only a taste of the information available about the intersections of money, politics, and Richard Pombo. It does not mention the industry-funded junkets that he encourages his staff to go on, nor does it mention his prolific abuse of House mailing privileges to, among other things, praise the Bush administration's support for returning snowmobiles to Yellowstone Park. (Tim Kingston)

Research assistance by Erin Podlipnik

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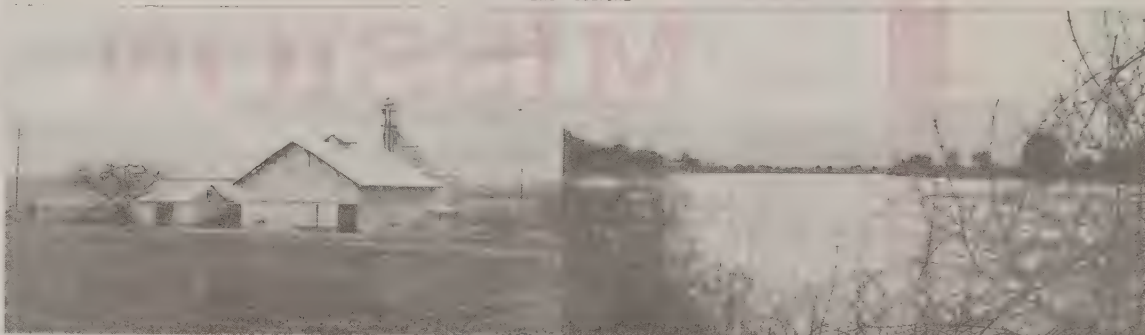
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NEWS + CULTURE



This is the land McCloskey and Pombo are tussling over: Farmland and rain-swollen rivers near Isleton, on the Delta.

McCloskey CONT.

McCloskey's basic stump speech is all about honesty in government, peppered with war stories from his time in Korea and a few choice political anecdotes. With the Loyal Order of Moose in Lodi, he shared nuggets about Pat Robertson's combat avoidance in Korea, arranged by Robertson's father, a senator, who got young Pat assigned as liquor officer. To the seniors at Vintage Retirement Residence, he noted being called the "conscience of the House." In both cases he quickly got down to brass tacks with broadsides aimed at Pombo for taking money from Abramoff-affiliated American Indian tribes, giving money to Delay's legal defense fund, and supporting indemnification of MTBE manufacturers who happened to be based in Delay's district. He is "clearly

an unethical congressman," McCloskey charged after asking the Vintage audience, "How many of you are embarrassed to be a Republican?" (Half the hands waveringly rose.)

But for every Bush-voting Republican like Kay Barton, an administrator at Vintage who now says she'll vote for the challenger "because he wants to make [Congress] honest," there is a Republican Lodi Moose club member like Nick Felton who says, after hearing McCloskey speak, "I am a conservative businessman. I hear that Pombo is trying to get oil from Alaska instead of using foreign oil. Pombo is for that, and I like his general attitude." Or there's Mayor Dan Bilbrey of Tracy, who, when asked for his view of McCloskey's bid, says, "I don't think I will tell you that, but I think that Pete has had his day, and he needs to enjoy his retirement. Is that clear enough?"

McCloskey isn't shy about touch-

ing on unpopular topics in his stump speeches. He calls President Bush's claims not to have known that the New Orleans levees were down "a damn lie." He quotes marines saying that the people making military policy in Iraq "are out of their mind," and says the troops should be out of Iraq by the end of the year. And while there is some grumbling from the audiences at both Vintage and the Moose lodge over those matters, the real fireworks come over immigration.

You can almost hear the howls of disagreement as he denides the homeland security arguments of the nativist wing of the Republican Party. "Osama bin Laden is not coming across the border disguised as Hector Lopez who wants a farm job," he quips. He says that the way to deal with the current wave of immigrants is to "give them a shot" at citizenship.

After talking to the Moose club,

McCloskey announced, almost with glee, "They were two to one against me." True — but he also got four volunteers out of the meeting.

McCloskey makes a point of letting audiences know where he stands, regardless of whom he offends. Whether speaking to the Moose lodge in Lodi, a retirement residence, or a Catholic school, he makes sure audiences know he is pro-choice. When asked about same-sex marriage in an interview on the mobile HQ, he can't resist a dig — at his own party. "Hell, that is a simple, basic Republican viewpoint: Keep the government out of the bedroom, I don't care who lives with who," he proclaims in his gruff military voice.

McCloskey was part of an effort by moderate and liberal Republicans to get the Congressional Ethics Committee up and running again, after the leadership under Delay had gutted it. The effort turned into something called the "Revolt of the Elders" against what they termed Washington, DC's "culture of corruption," and it targeted a series of Republicans who took immense sums of money from Abramoff and other lobbyists. Their prime targets were Delay, John Doolittle, Randy "Top Gun" Cunningham, who has since resigned, and, of course, Pombo. The "Elders" got busy trying to find untainted Republicans to run against those immersed in the swamps of scandal.

McCloskey ran after Pombo foes failed to find anyone in the 11th District to run against the incumbent on an anticorruption ticket. A reality check says victory is extremely unlikely. But reality these days is getting very, very weird. Outside of McCloskey's RV HQ, one feels he doesn't stand a chance — but inside, McCloskey's determination and optimism feel virally infectious. As the photographer accompanying me asks after a day with the campaign, "Have you ever seen a football bounce? Maybe he will catch a good bounce." **SPRO**

www.petemccloskey.com

www.citizensforethics.org

Pombo on the issues

To say that Richard Pombo is an environmental skeptic is putting it mildly. When asked if Pombo accepted the worldwide scientific consensus that global warming is a fact, his spokesperson, Wayne Johnson, shilly-shallied. "What I have heard him say is the jury is still out," Johnson cautiously ventured. "For those absolutely convinced, I would not put him in that category."

Pombo entered Congress determined to "reform" the Endangered Species Act and other tree-hugging deprecations on the rights of private property owners. Before arriving in Washington, he cowrote a book titled *This Land Is Our Land: How to End the War on Private Property*, in which he declared that he'd become politically active after a skirmish with the East Bay Regional Park District about the creation of a public right-of-way through his property. He later switched his story to say that his family's property values had been hurt when their land was designated a San Joaquin kit fox critical habitat.

Both claims were entirely without merit. But Pombo is not one to let the facts get in the way.

Pombo says the ESA, which is widely regarded as one of the more successful pieces of environmental legislation ever, is a failure. Pombo's "reforms," however, recently ran into a brick wall in the Senate. If passed, the reforms would have removed the concept of critical habitat from the ESA, which means that a threatened species would have been protected, but its home territory would not have received such protection.

Pombo has hit numerous other environmental high points. Among them was his idea to allow ham radio operators to erect antennae on the Farallones Islands. He

proposed selling 15 sites within the national parks as a way of raising money for energy development. He was one of the original sponsors of the legislation to allow drilling on Alaska's north slope.

And the 11th Congressional District representative has taken interesting stands on all sorts of other issues, from civil rights to drugs to gun control to gay rights. Because he has such a wide range of conservative interests, a short list of his Congressional voting record will suffice.

Pombo has opposed stem cell research, supports banning "partial birth" abortion, and has a 0 percent rating from NARAL, the pro-choice group. He voted for the constitutional ban on same-sex marriage and against allowing gay adoption in Washington, DC.

He has voted in favor of making the PATRIOT Act permanent and supports a constitutional amendment to oppose flag burning and desecration. He supports more prisons, the death penalty, and more cops. He voted to prohibit medical marijuana and HIV-prevention needle exchange, in Washington, DC.

Pombo has a 97 percent approval rating from the US Chamber of Commerce. He opposes gun control and product-misuse lawsuits against gun manufacturers. He got an A-plus rating from the National Rifle Association.

For a more in-depth appreciation of Richard Pombo's politics, go to www.ontheissues.org/CA/Richard-Pombo.htm, which gives him a 70 percent hard-right conservative rating. (Tim Kingston)

Research assistance by Erica Holt

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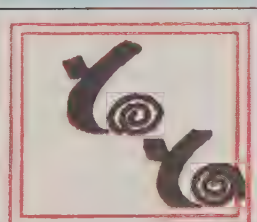
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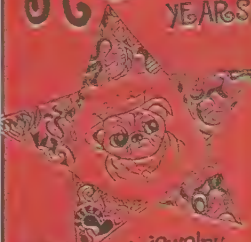
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Saluting small business

Our second annual Small Business Awards • Guardian photos by Neil Motteram

By Bruce B. Brugmann
 > bruce@sfbg.com

Back in my hometown of Rock Rapids, Iowa, a flatland of tall corn and homesteaded farms way out in northwest Iowa, my grandfather and father ran a small, family-owned drugstore for more than seven decades.

The town was then and still is about 2,800 in population, and we were miles away from the nearest cities of Sioux Falls, SD, and Sioux City, Iowa. The merchants, and the farmers and townfolk who patronized them, had to go it pretty much alone and depend on each other for economic sustenance.

In the Brugmann family we bought our shoes at Jensen's shoe

store, our clothes at Bernstein's department store, and our groceries from Bob Bendinger's and Tony Sieparda's grocery stores. We ate our meals out at Jay's and the Grill Cafe. We used Jim Wells to do our taxes, went to both Doc Wubben and Doc Cook, the town's two doctors, had our teeth treated by Doc Lee and Doc Fisch, and went to endless church suppers to support the local churches.

I often asked my grandfather and my dad why they went out of their way to do all these things, and they would reply: "We want to keep our money working in town."

When my wife, Jean, and I founded the *Guardian*, in 1966, we quickly found that the cooperative

small business way of life that worked in Rock Rapids worked the same way in San Francisco, with its tradition of neighborhoods and communities. Small business, we found, was not only the leading job generator and a key piece of the city's urban fabric; small business was — and is — also critical to building sustainable local economies in San Francisco and most other cities.

A long list of studies shows that small businesses keep more money circulating in the local economy than big chains do. (Check out the Andersonville retail study: www.civiceconomics.com/Andersonville/html/reports.html). And academics and policy-

makers around the country are increasingly discussing ways that cities can be more self-reliant, work more with local resources, and thus be both environmentally and economically stronger. What they're talking about, of course, is the value of small, locally owned, independent businesses.

Big chains see a community like San Francisco as a place from which to extract money as quickly as possible, much like the strip miners in the Sierras. Small businesses see the city as a place to invest human capital to build real community — to join merchant groups, get involved in local politics, hire local kids, patronize other businesses, work to invigorate their neighborhoods. (Go

to the San Francisco Locally Owned Merchants' Alliance at www.sfloamorg/whylocal.com.)

The *Guardian* is happy to salute the small business community with our second annual Small Business Awards.

This year we give special recognition to Arthur Jackson, a former award-winner who for almost four decades helped thousands of people get jobs in small, independent, locally owned businesses through his employment agency, Jackson Personnel. He died April 10, at age 58, after a courageous fight against a series of illnesses that included a kidney transplant. We have created a special Diversity in Business Award in his name. **SFBG**

1906 Earthquake Survivor: Anchor Brewing Company

1705 Mariposa, SF
 (415) 863-8350, www.anchorbrewing.com

Situated at the foot of increasingly residential Potrero Hill, San Francisco stalwart Anchor Brewing Company defies typical American business practice. Still independently owned and community oriented after more than 100 years in business, the brewers of Anchor Steam have found international success without turning to outsourcing or investors. With only 54 employees producing a mere 55,000 barrels of beer annually (Sierra Nevada brews 600,000 and Sam Adams 1.5 million) Anchor remains small, traditional — and in business.

Anchor is a survivor, all right, but the brewery might not have lasted if it hadn't been for a young Stanford graduate, Fritz Maytag, who bought a majority share of the business for a few thousand dollars in 1965. The 19th-century brewery had burnt down twice (once after the 1906 earthquake), relocated, changed owners at least three times, and closed for 13 years during prohibition.

Maytag recalls the flagging state of affairs when he first got on board: "The little brewery was so primitive, and the beer would go sour." He immediately set out to learn the beer biz and tinker with the formula, but he didn't turn a profit until 1975, when improvements caused the popularity of Anchor Steam to soar.

Maytag then faced the dilemma of how to balance his company's size and traditions with high demand for his suds. In 1992 he considered going public, but a microbrewery fad exploded in the United States, and Anchor Brewing suddenly had plenty of competitors. Maytag was relieved. "It would have cost such a lot of money to expand. I certainly didn't



Fritz Maytag, owner

have the money and didn't want to sell."

Instead of growing his business, Maytag concentrates on the quality of his brews, using the freshest ingredients, original equipment, and personally ensuring the integrity of every batch.

"Being small is okay," says the owner, who knows all of his employees personally and sends them home with a case of beer each week.

He's also a good neighbor. In 1990 Anchor made Potrero Commons Ale and donated all the proceeds to build a nearby park. And with Maytag at the helm, don't expect to see Anchor in a can anytime soon. (Erica Holt)

Chain Alternative: Brownie's Hardware

1563 Polk Street, SF
 (415) 673-8900

It's a Brownie's tradition: Every owner of the hardware store has served as president of the Polk Street Merchants Association at one time or another. And the current owner, Steven Cornell, is no exception. Recently his hardware store hosted a press conference and awards ceremony for small businesses, like Brownie's, that have been in San Francisco since the 1906 earthquake.

An open hardware store comes in handy during a disaster. Cornell remembers when his neighborhood lost electricity for three days during the 1989 quake. Neighbors came to him in need of batteries, flashlights, and candles, and nearly half of them didn't have any cash. Cornell didn't keep track of any names; he just kept a tally of goods that went out the door and asked people to come back when they had the money. "They all did," he says with a broad smile beneath his fatherly brown mustache. "After it all, we had one unaccounted hatch mark, and I'll chalk that up to poor accounting."

Brownie's seems like any other neighborhood hardware store. It's small and crowded; shelves tower with housewares, paint, plumb-

ing, and hardware. According to Cornell, what sets it apart is service. As many as eight employees a day sporting Brownie's name tags work the registers and offer assistance among the narrow aisles. "Most people come in with a project," he says. "Our job is to help them find what they need and think of the problems they'll encounter."

That quality of service extends outside the walls of a store that's been in Cornell's family since 1950. Located on the corner of Polk and Sacramento — in the heart of what the old-timers still call Polk Gulch, just five blocks from where Cornell went to elementary school — the shop occupies an avenue of small businesses. "I do most of my business with people who live in apartments," says Cornell, who stocks his store for a renter's needs. Instead of throwing down a couple hundred dollars for a drill, customers can rent one or even bring in whatever needs a hole or a screw.

From selling Muni passes at no profit to working with city legislature to get health insurance companies to cover domestic partners of small-business employees, Cornell has always been an active community member. (Amanda Witherell)

Steven Cornell, owner



Arthur Jackson Diversity in Business Award: Fabric8

3318 22nd St., SF
(888) 554-4321, www.fabric8.com

Hoping to spread San Francisco style — in all its bounty of shapes, sounds, and colors — across the land, Olivia Ongpin and Antony Quintal founded Fabric8 10 years ago. They started selling locally made, youth-oriented clothing, jewelry, and other handicrafts on the company's Web site.

When they recently had the chance to open up a brick-and-mortar storefront, they leapt at the opportunity to showcase a diverse selection of today's young Bay Area artists and designers. Found-object dioramas by Swiss-born, Bay Area-bred DJ-artist Romanowski, small paintings priced for the collector on a budget, and mix CDs by homeboys Tom Thump and UFO reflect an eclectic SF-based flavor in the Mission District shop's kooky-kitsch homage to the quaint. (Think indoor suburban backyard, complete with illuminated sky-blue ceiling, wall-to-wall SYNLaw, and a treasure trove of tiki-themed paraphernalia.)

A background in supporting the underground art scene drove the pair to get into retail. Ongpin, a San Francisco native with roots in nonprofit food distribution and jazz writing, and Quintal, a computer engineer and designer, first made a name for themselves hosting hip, club-inspired trunk shows and DJ-driven events. It was through these activities that the two met well-known Bay Area artists such as Sirron Norris, Brian Barneco, Ursula Young,



Olivia Ongpin, owner

and Nomzee, who have all contributed to a mural of familiar San Francisco landmarks stained into the store's woodwork.

Aside from offering local art at very affordable prices, the store also ventures into more retail-oriented fare. One highlight is the brainchild of local boy Manuel "Gonz One" Gonzalez, maker of the aMonster plush toy. These handmade, furry creatures come with built-in speakers and an interior pouch for an iPod or CD player — a very cute way for music freaks to amplify their tunes. Chiquita Banana walkie-talkies, old Nike belt buckles, a Mr. T Chia Pet, and a set of Lucite napkin rings with built in salt and pepper shakers are also for sale, much of it stuffed like bric-a-brac into the store's dresser drawer-like display system. "Museum store meets *Sanford and Son*," is how the owners describe their particular aesthetic combination of creative sprawl and cuddly nostalgia. (Sidra Durst)

Small Business Activist: Comet Skateboards

458 Brannan, SF
(510) 625-9045, www.comet skateboards.com

What if we saved our precious natural resources by not transporting our food and clothes halfway around the world? What if Oakland had its own BART-accessible skate park? And what if everyone there were riding skateboards made from stuff that wasn't gnarly on the planet?

The proprietors of Comet Skateboards, founders Jason Salfi and Jonathan Reese and co-owner Don Shaffer, want to make all of these grand ideas realities. They're already doing so with their stylishly designed skateboards, with many decks sporting artwork by Oakland youths. Manufactured by Glissade Snow Board Company, a solar-powered facility in SoMa, the boards are made from sustainably grown bamboo or maple and will be glued together with a soy-based resin.

By "merging sustainability ethos with pop culture," as Salfi explains, "[Comet] can help push youth over the edge" in terms of influencing youth to think more about the environment.

But their eco-consciousness doesn't just end with the manufacturing of their boards. The entrepreneurship would also like to foster other small businesses in the Bay Area while saving the planet at the same time.

For the past two years, Shaffer has been busy working toward his vision of living economies. He started the San Francisco office of the Business Alliance for Local Living Economies, which connects local agriculture with local busi-



Jason Salfi and Don Shaffer, co-owners

ness to encourage people to sell Bay Area-made goods locally. The organization, which has chapters in Philadelphia and Victoria, British Columbia, also supports the principle that when businesses stay small and local, they better serve the community, labor, and the environment.

As for that skate park, the company is planning the Hood Games block party for May 13 at 15th and Franklin Streets in downtown Oakland, all to help fund the park on Jefferson Square.

While Shaffer works with BALLE, Salfi involves himself with Earth Alliance Institute, which gets youth involved in solving global environmental problems. Looks like Comet Skateboards will have many successors in the next generation. (Deborah Giattina)

Community Activist: Bay Area Fair Trade Coalition

bayareafairtradecoalition.blogspot.com

If you happen to be at one of Noe Valley's many cafés on Saturday, April 29, you may encounter a motley, overcaffeinated crew talking about consciousness in a cup. Don't fret: It's no evangelical coffee cult; these people simply want you to know that what you buy can have a profound effect on the lives of people around the world.

That's why the Bay Area Fair Trade Coalition is going around San Francisco, neighborhood by neighborhood, planting seeds of economic and social justice.

As volunteer coalition member Kelley Buhles claims, "We want to make San Francisco the US's first fair trade town, where Fair Trade Certified products are much more than just a niche."

The BAFTC, a newly formed group of nonprofits, activists, businesses, and consumers, endeavors to make this a reality by organizing café crawls during which volunteers migrate from café to café, spreading the fair trade gospel to café owners and managers.

During the crawls, members of the coalition explain how free markets do a great job of producing a mass of working people, and that capitalism's ever accelerating race to drive down prices on basic commodities leaves farmers in the global south without the capital to afford such necessities as clean running water and access to health care and education.

Fair trade groups seek to ameliorate those problems by setting a floor price — the lowest price at which an importer can buy a product — on goods from farming collectives, which

allows them to remain independent from multinational agribusinesses.

Though it is working with the city on legislation, at this point the BAFTC's main objective is to educate and create demand. It has teamed up with Alter Eco, a company that sells only Fair Trade Certified products, to promote fair trade in the city at a bazaar to be held Saturday, May 13, World Fair Trade Day. There will be farmers



Kelley Buhles, volunteer

from producer countries explaining how fair trade benefits their communities and free Fair Trade Certified products for the tasting. (Nick Rahaim)

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For 38 years, a man named Fat Dog has been serving as Berkeley's own musical Dr. Frankenstein.

As the owner of Fat Dog's World Famous Subway Guitars, Fat Dog, along with his crew of Igor-like technicians, has been saving dismembered guitar parts from shuttered factories, cobbling them into weird custom instruments, and passing the savings along to you.

The results are "proletarian guitars," as Fat Dog likes to say, favored by first-time players and well-known musicians alike. Over the years the shop has catered to untold numbers of artists, from Les Claypool to Green Day to that fifth grader on the way to her first guitar lesson.

Aside from looking pretty sweet, the critical benefit of playing one of Fat Dog's custom creations is that even if you're a broke, struggling, or maybe even terrible musician, you can still get a totally unique instrument at a budget price.

Offering these customized wacky wonders at an average price of about \$400, Fat Dog says, "We sort of were more aimed at the working musicians and people that didn't have that privileged budget to buy those more expensive instruments."

The original intent of Subway Guitars was to operate as a repair shop. In keeping with that tradition, the repair end of the business still operates as a technician's co-op, in which the people doing the work actually get to keep 100 percent of the cost of labor.

The business's keen interest in reusability, fair pricing, and fair labor practices resonates in another of the shop's unexpected retail endeavors: promoting alternative transportation.

Those not in need of gussied-up vintage guitars might nevertheless be interested in a gussied-up vintage bicycle. The shop has recently reinstated its \$50 bike sale, garnering inventory from an old barn where Fat Dog has been storing road bikes and cruisers for years.



Fat Dog, owner

However long the business stays in its original location in North Berkeley, and however many bicycles are put back on the road, Fat Dog says his focus will always be on guitars.

"We'll keep going on with the same mission," he says, "which is providing people with good, really high-quality guitars without subscribing to collectors' absurd prices." (Ivy McNally)

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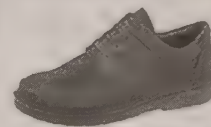
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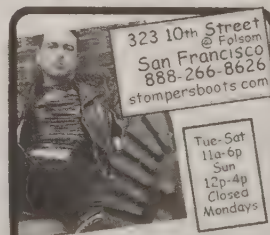
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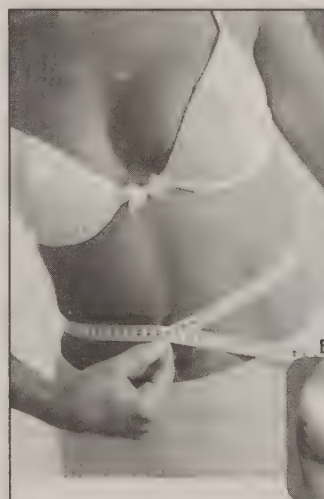


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The great e-mail debate

By Annalee Newitz
 > bitchenmail@techsploitation.com

TECHSPLIOTATION Geeks turn social events into intellectual debates, so it should be no surprise that intellectual debates are often an excuse for geeky socializing.

This was certainly the case at a recent benefit for the Electronic Frontier Foundation (my former employer), held at a San Francisco indie movie theater known for its seedy-progressive ambience. We were there to ponder nothing less than the future of the free world — at least, if you define “free world” as free e-mail, which is something I know all of us have done once in a while.

Most people already pay an ISP for Internet access, so the notion of having to pay for e-mail on top of that is a fairly repugnant one. But that doesn't mean there aren't lots of companies who'd like to make a business model out of it. A case in point is Goodmail, a Silicon Valley start-up that provides a middleperson service called e-mail certification. Companies and banks that send bulk e-mail pay Goodmail to verify their authenticity, and Goodmail passes a cut to ISPs like AOL or Yahoo!, who whisk the certified mail past their spam filters and on to your in-box. The idea is that Goodmail's certification helps e-mail recipients tell the difference between phishing e-mails and real requests for information from their banks.

Public sentiments went sour when AOL announced it would be using Goodmail because it sounded a lot like a pay-to-play system in which only wealthy customers could afford to get their messages past the ISP's notoriously clueless spam filters. That could mean more spam rather than less. Worse, it would impair free speech on the Net. Nonprofit bulk mailers like activist group MoveOn might get their mail blocked simply because they couldn't afford certification. Nearly 500 nonprofit groups, fearing this scenario, signed an open letter the EFF wrote to AOL asking it to drop Goodmail's certification system.

Longtime EFF supporter and former board member Esther Dyson, however, objected to the campaign against Goodmail. As a free-market idealist, she welcomes any new business model for handling e-mail — and particularly for tackling the epidemic phishing problem — and felt

that Goodmail shouldn't be discouraged from testing its mettle in the marketplace. When I argued with her about this at a recent conference, she threw down the gauntlet: “I'd like to debate EFF about this publicly — you tell them that,” she said. Dutiful Dyson fan that I am, I made a headline for Danny O'Brien, the EFF's activism coordinator and spam policy wonk. As soon as the two of them started bickering about e-mail protocol SMTP, I knew the fight was on.

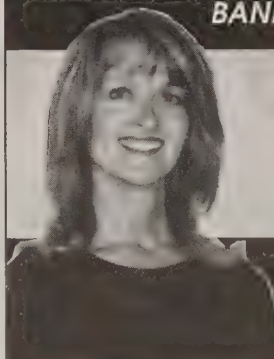
A couple months later, I sat with about 100 other geeks who'd come to watch O'Brien ask Dyson why she wants e-mail senders to pay for the privilege. Turns out Dyson's perfect universe doesn't involve a Goodmail-style model. Instead, she favors a system wherein e-mail recipients are paid to read e-mail — if you thought a piece of mail is spam, you'd have the option to bill the sender. If you wanted the mail, you could accept it without charge. Although Dyson admitted this system might require an unwieldy billing infrastructure and many market mishaps, she's nevertheless “pro-choice” when it comes to companies — even Goodmail — experimenting with business models for an e-mail system that, she concluded, “simply can't be free anymore.”

O'Brien, for his part, made an impassioned case for the spam and phishing problems to be solved via social economies like the ones that have made Wikipedia and many open source projects so successful. “Solving this by falling back on the monetary economy is an incredibly old-fashioned and conservative move,” he said. He urged everybody to look for nonmonetary economic solutions whereby communities collaborate to build tools that help certify legitimate mail and filter out spam and don't force people to pay cash to engage in free speech.

EFF founder and technology philanthropist Mitch Kapor, who moderated the debate, ended the evening by saying that nobody had won. “We'll see who turns out to be right in the future,” he said, laughing. For my part, well, I'm a social economy idealist. In my perfect future, a hell of a lot more than e-mail will be free. But keeping one of the greatest engines of free speech from backsliding into the monetary economy is a good start. **SFBG**

Annalee Newitz is a surly media nerd who uses open source software to spam filter the 8,000 e-mails she gets every day.

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THE SAN FRANCISCO BAY GUARDIAN PICKS



APRIL 26-MAY 2, 2006 SWEET WILLIAM

By Johnny Ray Huston
> johnny@sfbg.com

Larry Clark recently revived William Eggleston's fabled 1973 movie *Stranded in Canton* at last year's Toronto International Film Festival, which makes sense, as Eggleston's characterful and unforgettable still photos of Memphis exerted an influence on Clark's legendary monograph *Tulsa* and the leapfrog jumps into other US regions of Clark's subsequent films. A prized document of early video creativity (at least partly the reason PixelVision fan Michael Almereyda has made an Eggleston doc), *Stranded in Canton* hits SF this week.

Thurs/27-Sat/29, 7:30 p.m.
Yerba Buena Center for the Arts
Screening Room
701 Mission, SF
\$5-\$8
(415) 978-2787
www.ybca.org



Look for these
Guardian Picks
arrows throughout
the A&E section for
other shows, films,
events, exhibits,
restaurants, and
performances
we recommend.

WEDNESDAY APRIL 26

BENEFIT

"Gender Pirates with Fresh Meat"

Ahoy, mates! Ladies, trannies, and queers! Fresh Meat Productions' "Gender Pirates with Fresh Meat" is a lust-filled night of music, dance, and burlesque by San Francisco's hottest transgender and queer performers, including the Mighty Slim Pickins, the SugaGilda Blues Revue, Harlem Shake Burlesque, the Whoa Nellies, and Storm Florez. Tranny rock legend Shawna Virago rocks your fishnets off, while Damegoodz's hardcore dance keep things rolling. And as if those weren't enough hands on deck, drag superstars the Cockivores show you how to rock on with your cock on and add their own special flavor to gender play. Proceeds benefit Fresh Meat 2006 and the Trans March. (Jenny Miyasaki)

8 p.m.
El Rio
3158 Mission, SF
\$7-\$10
(415) 282-3325
www.elriosf.com
www.freshmeatproductions.org

THURSDAY APRIL 27

OPEN MIC

"Poems under the Dome"
"Bring your favorite poem, or read one of your own, under the dome," said San Francisco word spinner Diamond Dave Whitaker, an open-mic veteran since 1957. During this month, rhyme we elevate, and it's the poet's time to celebrate. Supes and the mayor pal up to donate; City Hall's the dome under which we'll congregate. Readings will be determined on a lottery basis; numbers pulled from a hat decide when your words will grace us. But don't wax loquacious, 'cause we all want a turn, and three hours ain't spacious. Thank the Beat

Museum and Library for making it free; City Lights and Poetry Flash also kicked in for fees.
(Amanda Witherell)

5:30-8:30 p.m.
North Light Court, City Hall
1 Dr. Carlton B. Goodlett Place, SF
Free
www.poemdom.com

FILM

"Movie on the Patio Night"
For this week's "Movie on the Patio Night," DJs Jenny (of Erase Errata) and Bobby have lined up an evening of intense female pairings, the kind that could lead to ruined lives and an insatiable hunger for yoni. First off, a screening of *Manji*, a 1964 Japanese flick about a housewife who falls hard, and tragically, for a beautiful but manipulative model. Later, Bonedust, a totally (Marshall) stacked duo from Providence, RI, plays fricken loud and scary epic rock. By the sounds of them, you'd expect this twosome to come at you from

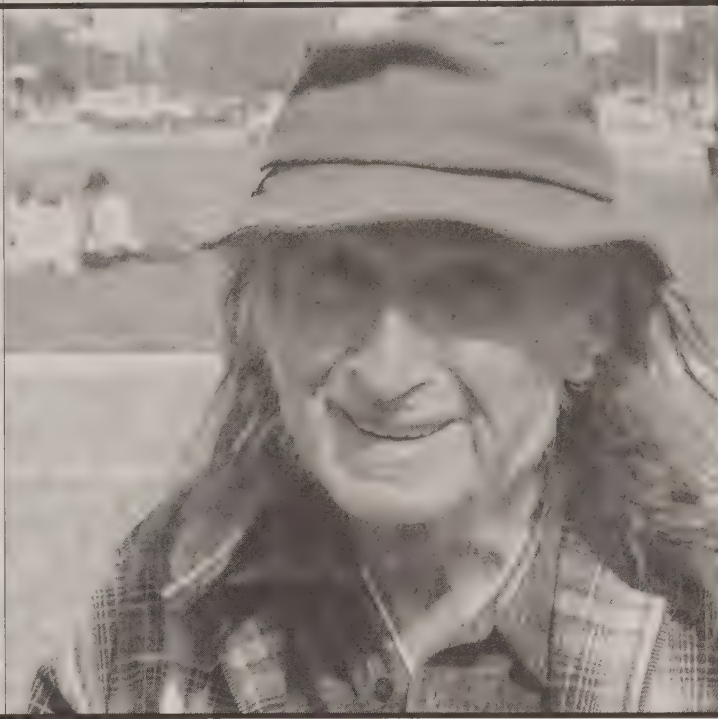
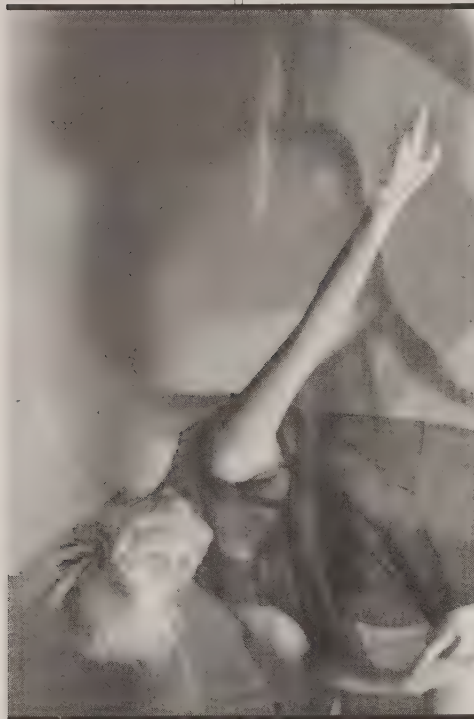
behind the grave, hell-bent on avenging crimes against Mother Nature, all the while never suspecting that lead bone player, Pippi Zornoza, makes lace doilies and cozy blankets in her spare time. Keeping it both fuzzy and ferocious, Death Sentence: Panda! also perform. Expect other special guests.
(Deborah Giattina)

9 p.m.
El Rio
3158 Mission, SF
\$5
(415) 282-3325
www.elriosf.com

FRIDAY APRIL 28

DANCE

Double Vision and Amy Lewis
What can shimmying sea lions and disembodied heads possibly have in common? Perhaps fodder for a wacky acid flashback? A ghastly nightmare? Or maybe an enchanting evening



of dance, video, and aural delight performed by intermedia group Double Vision and choreographer Amy Lewis. For two nights (the first being a part of Bay Area National Dance Week), Double Vision and Lewis look to multimedia approaches, stylistic disciplines, and extractions of mathematical and science formulas to achieve a cunning slab of performance art. Double Vision premieres "Fog Is Not Ghost" and restagings of "... As If by Falling" and "Disembodied Head, No. 4." Lewis draws most of her choreography from musical and artistic theories and screens three pieces, including one inspired by Kandinsky's theories of how color affects the spiritual body. (Chris Sabbath)

8–10 p.m.
CounterPULSE
1310 Mission, SF
tonight, free; Sat/29, \$10
(510) 535-2504
www.double-vision.biz

SATURDAY APRIL 29

DANCE CLUB

"Three Kinds of Stupid Spring Fling Dance Party"

After weeks of rain, what better way to kick off the spring than to dance your ass off at the Rickshaw Stop's annual Spring Fling Dance Party? Join Three Kinds of Stupid DJs BAS, Caldrige, and Brother Grimm, who promise to spin a little something for everyone, including a perfect mix of rock, hip-hop, electro, soul, and funk. Treat yourself to one or many of the drink specials of the evening and dance in front of some mesmerizing and confounding visuals. If that doesn't sound like enough to shake off those April showers, then how about a live set by the Bay Area's garage-soul dance band Harold Ray Live in Concert? The night promises to be the perfect, unpretentious dance party to ring in the spring, so arrive early and receive a free mix CD of tracks selected by the DJs. (Jenny Miyasaki)

What can shimmying sea lions and disembodied heads possibly have in common?

9 p.m.
The Rickshaw Stop
155 Fell, SF
\$8
(415) 861-2011
www.rickshawstop.com

SUNDAY APRIL 30

AUTHOR EVENT

John Malkin
For almost nine years, author, activist, and musician John Malkin has had the pleasure of conducting and broadcasting a series of interviews with musical superstars such as Laurie Anderson, Philip Glass, the Indigo Girls, and Tom Morello on Free Radio Santa Cruz. Today, Malkin appears to support his new book, *Sounds of Freedom* (Parallax Press), a compilation of Malkin's interviews with 16 musicians discussing their personal explorations into social change and spiritual growth.

Malkin uncovers prejudices that people (including himself) have against social and spiritual transformation and provides a stimulating afterthought to the ways religion, war, politics, and activism affect American culture. Malkin discusses and signs his book, along with *Sounds of Freedom* interviewee Boots Riley of Oakland rap ensemble the Coup. (Sabbath)

4 p.m.
Cody's Books
2 Stockton, SF
Free
(415) 773-0444
www.codysbooks.com

PERFORMANCE

Reverend Billy and the Stop Shopping Choir

We here in the mighty US of A love and honor three things above all else: the Lord, television, and shopping. We adore consuming! It's fun, it's active, and we all know you can never have too many pairs of shoes.

But if you find yourself involuntarily twitching when you skip a day of shopping, or if a deluge of clothing that you've never worn buries you whenever you open your closet door, you might want to consider repenting for your hyperconsumerist sins. Reverend Billy and his Stop Shopping Choir — who grace the stage tonight in support of local economies and life without consumerism and in evangelical protest against Wal-Mart and other superstores — will forgive you for your susceptibility to the image of the cute little Target dog that's plastered all over the world. Reverend Billy, have mercy on us all! (Eliana Fiore)

8 p.m.
Victoria Theatre
2961 16th St., SF
\$10–\$12
(415) 863-7576
www.victoriatheatre.org
www.revilly.com
CONTINUES ON PAGE 29, »

Clockwise from top left: Images from William Eggleston's *Stranded in Canton* (see intro), Reverend Billy (see Sun/30); Amy Leonards, Amy Nielson, and Isabelle Sjahsam from *Double Vision* (see Fri/28); Diamond Dave (see Thurs/27), the Red Krayola (see Mon/1)

REVEREND BILLY PHOTO BY SHANNON COCHRANE
DOUBLE VISION PHOTO BY ANNE PEATTIE
DIAMOND DAVE PHOTO BY E.K. KEITH



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WINE & SPIRITS

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Sunset Rubdown (see Tues/2)



PICKS CONT.,

MONDAY MAY 1

MUSIC

Red Krayola

I've admired Jim O'Rourke for his frequent collaborations with a variety of artists and bands ever since his heyday in Gastr del Sol, and I've finally discovered the influence of his sounds and unbending work ethic — Mayo Thompson of the Red Krayola. Mingling components of psychedelia and art rock with abstract noise and country folk, Thompson — the only original member of the Red Krayola — creates an avant-garde wet dream saturated in DIY punk fashion and the totally bizarre. Thompson's long journey through the experimental abyss predates the no-wave and post-punk explosion of the late 1970s, and his hearty résumé includes musical alliances with everyone from O'Rourke to Pere Ubu and John Fahey. For this very brief tour supporting the Red Krayola's 12th album, *Introduction* (Drag City), Thompson jams with Slovenly's Tom Watson and Tortoise's Jon McEntire. (**Sabbath**)

With Oh-Sees

9 p.m.

Cafe du Nord

2170 Market, SF

\$13

(415) 861-5016

www.cafedunord.com

TUESDAY MAY 2

MUSIC

Sunset Rubdown

Sunset Rubdown strips down the coarse instrumentation of Frog Eyes and Wolf Parade, two bands whose common denominator is Spencer Krug. In Sunset Rubdown, Krug's voice shudders and stumbles from one note to the next, creating a naturally melancholic vocal style that would make even "Zip-a-dee-doo-da" sound like a ghost story. Released today, the band's new full-length album, *Shut Up I Am Dreaming* (Absolutely Kosher), is striking in its own right, being slightly

more polished than its previous lo-fi efforts. Fans will not be disappointed by Krug's hiccupy yelps — minus the crash and thunder of Wolf Parade's live show — and will also appreciate the band's retention of the slightly surreal Bowie-esque narrative songwriting of Frog Eyes. (**Miyasaki**)

With Okay and Dame Satan
9 p.m.

Bottom of the Hill
1233 17th St., SF

\$8

(415) 621-4455

www.bottomofthehill.com

The *Guardian* listings deadline is two weeks prior to our Wednesday publication date. To submit an item for consideration, please include the title of the event, a brief description of the event, date

LOCAL ARTIST:

Ulrika Andersson

and time, venue name, street address (listing cross streets only isn't sufficient), city, telephone number readers can call for more information, telephone number for media, and admission costs. Send information to Listings, the *Guardian* Building, 135 Mississippi St., SF, CA 94107; fax to (415) 487-2506; or e-mail (paste press release into e-mail body — no text attachments, please) to listings@sfbg.com. We cannot guarantee the return of photos, but enclosing an SASE helps. Digital photos may be submitted in jpeg format; the image must be at least 240 dpi and four inches by six inches in size. We regret we cannot accept listings over the phone.

TITLE OF PIECE: *The sense, face 1*

THE STORY: "The image is from my new body of work focusing on recent studies of the human mind: 'The Sense.' The portraits are an experiment in how minimal an image can be while still portraying a personality in a few wispy strokes."

BACKGROUND: Andersson earned her BFA from San Francisco Art Institute in 1998 and her MFA from California College of the Arts in 2000. She has since returned to SFAI for teaching appointments alongside her work as an Exploratorium exhibit developer.

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EVENTS

SFBG.com

HELLRAISER HAPPY HOUR: DEVIL HORNS AT THE ROCKIT ROOM

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April 27 @ The Rockit Room, 406 Clement at 5th Ave
ROCK-IT-ROOM.COM

ROVA:ARTS PRESENTS ROVAT... 2006: GLASS HEAD

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April 28-29 @ Kanbar Hall, Jewish Community Center, 3200 California at Presidio
ROVA.ORG

23rd ANNUAL INTERNATIONAL BEER FESTIVAL

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April 29 @ Fort Mason Festival Pavilion, San Francisco
SFBEEFEST.COM

A MIGHTY RUCKUS AT ISLAIS CREEK

Conceived as "Coachella's unwashed, black-sheep cousin," The event will feature 12 bands on two stages (one indoor and one outdoor), a screening room for short films and videos, a rock poster art show, a DJ lounge and a classic/custom car show. The lineup includes Fabulous Disaster, Simon Stinger, The Black Furies, Bayskout, The Fleshies, Goolerman, Three Weeks Clean, The Grannies, The Boneless Children Foundation, Sloatbucket, The Teenage Harlots and the Casey Neill Band from Portland, with more TBA. Screening room curated by SF IndieFest, Microcinema International, Killing My Lobster's Hi/Lo Film Festival and the Brainwash Film Festival. Local artist Chris Shaw is curating the rock poster art show. DJ Lounge features DJ Skip (New Wave City), Jenny Fake (Suicide Club/Fake), Monkey (Pirate Cat Radio) Danimo (Shadowlounge), and Hick Smokey (Drunken Monkey Lounge). All ages and free to the public.

April 29 @ Bay Area Motor Club, 1598 Custer Ave

SFINDIE.COM/RUCKUS

THE DEVIL ON ALL SIDES (LE DIABLE EN PARTAGE)

Translated and directed by foolsFURY artistic director Ben Yalom, the production is infused with the vibrant physical style that is the troupe's trademark. A haunting tragedy set during the war in ex-Yugoslavia, the play's protagonist, Lorka, a Christian, falls in love with and marries Selma, a Muslim. As the war breaks out, the play shows us the pressures on their love, their families, and the crumbling world around them in a style that seamlessly blends expressionism, poetry, fantasy, and harsh, raw reality.

May 7-28 @ Traveling Jewish Theatre, 470 Florida St
FOOLSURY.ORG

SUSTAINABLE WORLD SYMPOSIUM & FESTIVAL

The purpose of the Symposium is to Educate (fostering an understanding of the most critical issues of our time); Motivate (giving a visceral sense of the urgency as well as the possibilities); and Activate (exploring the many daily ways that all of us can contribute.) The program is a sequential, plenary curriculum that combines experiential presentations, powerful documentary video excerpts and panel discussions. 60 exhibitor booths will be on display in the hall outside the main presentation auditorium, providing further access to resources and solution-oriented projects. Also, a special experiential area called Ubuntu Cultural Village will feature on-going performances, a world cafe, "green project demos," and a Youth Symposium (high school level) happening two hours per day.

May 13-14 @ St. Mary's Cathedral Conference Center, 1111 Gough St. (at Geary)
SWCOALITION.ORG

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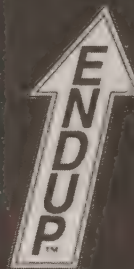
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ShOOey, Sunwoo, AJ

**04.30.06. T-Dance
John Early Show &
Ghettodisco w DJ Hawthorne**

04.26.06 Wednesday MINX 10p-4a.
04.27.06 Thursday NEXUS 10p-4a
04.28.06 Friday Fag Fridays 10p-6a
04.29.06 Saturday AM Ascension 6a-1p

04.30.06 Super Soul Sundayz 8p-4a with
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*The Finger agrees
that a grown man
should never skip.
Unless he is holding a basket.*



*The Finger thinks
fifth year seniors
should be considered
grad students too.*



*The Finger thinks
pj's are acceptable attire
to an 8:00 am class.*

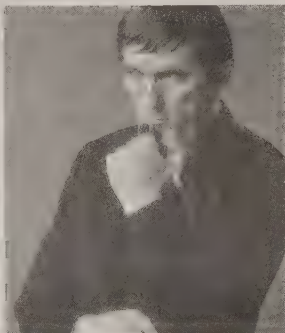
followthefinger.com

King of Shadows

TRIBUTE *Days of Our Lives* had Patch and Kayla; *Passions* had Precious, Timmy, and Zombie Charity (don't ask). But *Dark Shadows* had werewolves, time travel, ghosts, a vampire protagonist (Jonathan Frid), and plots that revolved around such curious objects as the severed hand of one Count Petofi (much sought after for its mystical powers). *Dark Shadows* — the original version of which ran from 1966 to 1971; it also spawned multiple films and revivals — was clearly a singular sensation, and much of the credit goes to its beloved creator-producer, Dan Curtis.

Curtis, who passed away March 27 at the age of 78, was also noted for his many 1970s TV films. Most contained gothic elements, including *The Night Stalker* and the Karen Black-tastic *Trilogy of Terror*, plus versions of *Frankenstein*, *Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde*, and *Dracula* (the latter two starring Jack Palance). On the big screen he directed *Black in the haunted-house tale* *Burnt Offerings*; he also helmed the anthology tale *Dead of Night*, written by frequent collaborator Richard Matheson.

These days, *The Montel Williams Show* tapes in *Dark Shadows'* old New York City studio (not among *Dark Shadows'* horrors, as far as I can tell, are unexpected paternity test results). But the soap's cult lives on, much like lovelorn vamp Barnabas Collins, with multiple DVD collections from MPI Home Video (www.mpi-homevideo.com) — endearing flubs from the show's live tapings intact. For more information on Curtis, visit the frighteningly complete www.collinwood.net, operated by European fanzine *Dark Shadows Journal*. (Cheryl Eddy)



Jonathan Frid strikes a vampiric pose as Barnabas.

Kill-er dude

Kill the Moonlight
(Plexifilm)

PRESS PLAY It coulda been *Slacker*, and instead, true to "Loser" form, it got lost. That was the fate of Steve Hanft's 1994 "underground classic" feature *Kill the Moonlight*.

Kill has a rep for being rarely seen but, weirdly, widely disseminated — due to the fact that its title character, would-be race car driver, fish hatchery feeder, and toxic waste cleaner Chance, provided the direct inspiration for Beck's first Gen X-Rosetta stone single, "Loser." Samples from the movie ("I'm a driver / I'm a winner / Things are gonna change / I can feel it," drones the never-say-die, ultimately unkillable Chance) popped up in the sleeper pop hit itself, and clips of the movie surfaced in the song's video, directed by Hanft (who also played with Beck in a band called Liquor Cabinet).

Alterna-strippers, Kiss revivalism, and bitchin' Camaros — how much more '90s can you get? With the release of this DVD — which includes a bonus soundtrack CD of music by Beck, the Raunch Hands, and Go to Blazes — you can finally bask in the low-budget, occasionally funny, often stiff, yet extremely atmospheric lo-fi glory of this 76-minute feature, which Hanft seems to have spun off with his bigger-budget 2001 feature, *Southlander*, starring a goofy musician named Chance and, well, Beck. (Kimberly Chun)

THE MIX

- (1) Keyshia Cole, Regency Center
- (2) Foot Foot, Fort Oregon
- (3) Maker Faire nerd love
- (4) Fairies and satyrs, Spring Fling, Mission Control
- (5) Watermelon madness courtesy of *The Wayward Cloud*, San Francisco International Film Festival

Ivy Room

WED 4/26
ERIC MCFADDEN TRIO

THUR 4/27
SHOWTIME @ 11
W/ DJ'S - TRUE JUSTICE,
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SLAP, REGGAE/TON
+ LIVE HIP HOP BY
LJZ & TRUE JUSTICE, WEEDA WEEDA,
THE FLO MASTERS, NIYANBINCHI

FRI 4/28
THE DYING CALIFORNIAN
MORNING SPY,
FOXTAIL SOMERSAULT

SAT 4/29
DRUNK HORSE
BIRDS OF A FEATHER, DJ CORY
(SALON LIGHTS)

SUN 4/30 - 4PM (EVENING SHOW)
TIPPY CANOE & THE PADDLEMAN
DATEI EIAN, THE PAPERDOLLS

TUE 5/2
STEVE FREUND TRIO
+ SPECIAL GUESTS

UPCOMING SHOWS:
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(TODD HAS PLAYED WITH LIQUID
JESUS, GOVERNMENT MULE, BEN
SHEPARD, CELEBRITY SKIN, FIREHOSE)
5/4 - SHOWTIME @ 11 W/
PERFORMANCE BY LJZ & TRUE
JUSTICE, BOOGIE SHACK, THE
KLUMPLORDZ, RASTA JMAGA
5/5 - DREAMDATE, THE HUSBANDS,
THE MAKES NICE
5/6 - BOB SEIGER'S BIRTHDAY:
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indie.electro.magic
CLUB i-D
dj Fletcher plus Omar [postscene]
live: KAP10KURT [mc]

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9 pm
[dance party]
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Crystal Skulls

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THE SUN - APACHE

WEDNESDAY, MAY 3 9:30-12
INDIE
MELLOWDRONE
LOLA RAY

FRIDAY, MAY 5 9PM-12
ROCK
**ROGER CLYNE AND
THE PEACEMAKERS**
GARRISON STARR

SATURDAY, MAY 6 9PM-12
ROCK
THE SHOTGUN
WEDDING QUINTET
TEKHITA (WU TANG)
JOE BAGALE

MONDAY, MAY 8 9:30-12
ROCK/INDIE
DESTROYER
HUDSON BELL

TUESDAY, MAY 9 9:30-12
ROCK (18+ SHOW)
NINE BLACK ALPS

THURSDAY, MAY 11 9PM-12
ROCK
WEST MEMPHIS 3
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MICHAEL GRAVES
OF THE MISFITS
FRACAS
CANDY FROM STRANGERS

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MAGIC BULLETS

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SUECO, THE PAWN SHOP KINGS

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THE FEED, OSTRICH HEAD

SATURDAY, MAY 6
THE LOOK
GOLD HOT CRASH / LOVE KRAFT
JADE OF DAYS/
IMMACULATE MESS

TUESDAY, MAY 9
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ROCK AND ROLL
AN AIDS LIFECYCLE RIDE BENEFIT
AUSTIN WILLACY

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AND THE MOON**
MEGAN SLANKARD
A CROSS CULTURAL
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THE GIRLFRIEND EXPERIENCE
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SATURDAY, MAY 13
THE YOUNG DUBLINERS
BUCKFAST

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WEDNESDAY, MAY 17
AND THURSDAY, MAY 18

ABC

FRIDAY, MAY 19 AND
SATURDAY, MAY 20
POP ROCKS
SUNDAY, MAY 21
SPONGE
UNEQUALED CLARITY

TUESDAY, MAY 23
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music

Touring — who needs touring? Dan Bejar, a.k.a. Destroyer, could certainly leave it — you can just see the tension pouring off his frame (center). Film School (right, sans Justin LaBo) certainly underwent the travails of the road when their Econoline and gear were stolen; come to their aid and rock out at the same time with this week's benefits at Bottom of the Hill. Half-Handed Cloud's John Ringhofer (left) has the right idea — sticking close to his Oakland home and partaking of the Hemlock's pleasures.

HALF-HANDED CLOUD PHOTO BY YONI WOLF. FILM SCHOOL PHOTO BY KIMBERLY CHUN



ABCs and Rubies

By Kimberly Chun
 > kimberly@sfbg.com

SONIC REDUCER A passionate music fan friend recently laid some curious medicine on me as we were hunkered down at Doc's Clock, watching our inexplicably enraged lady bartender toss one of our half-full beverages: My friend's musician ex had already written off his barely released singer-songwriter-ish album, because according to his veteran estimate, "people are only interested in bands these days."

Maybe that's why Vancouver's indie-esque artist and sometime New Pornographer Dan Bejar rocks under the name Destroyer. Still, it's hard to scan the music news these days and avoid single, solitary monikers like Bruce Springsteen or Neil Young, both breaking from their associations with bands and recording protest songs old and new. Bejar's fellow Canadian Young just last week offered up the quickie, choir-backed *Living with War*, which includes a song titled "Let's Impeach the President" and streams for free at www.neilyoung.com starting April 28 (leading one to wonder if the Peninsula's Shakey is responding to the calls at his onstage SXSW interview for a new "Ohio"?). Perhaps in an instantly downloadable, supermashed, and highly

fragmented aural landscape, there remains a certain heroic power in creating and performing in the first person, under your own name, while reaching for a collective imagination, some elusive third person.

Chatting on the phone, over the border, Bejar might not easily parse as a part of the aforementioned crew, though he musically cross-references urban rock 'n' rollers, stardusted glitter kids, and louche lounge cats, explicitly tweaking those "West Coast maximalists, exploring the blues, ignoring the news" on "Priest's Knees," off his new full-length, *Destroyer's Rubies* (Merge). Some might even venture that the late-night, loose lips and goosed hips, full-blown rock of the album, his sixth, marks it as his most indulgent to date.

And Bejar, 33 and a Libra, will readily fess up to his share of indulgences, in lieu of collecting juicy tour adventures. On tour he says, "I tend to go and then kind of hide backstage, get up onstage, try and play, get off, and continue to hide backstage."

"I'm not super into rock clubs," Bejar continues. "I just don't feel a need to make a home of them."

Just back from the first part of his US journeys ("We played 12 or 14 of 16 dates. That's hardly any. I think most bands would think that's psychotic"), Bejar does feel quite at home in Vancouver and will reluctantly theorize about Canadian music. "I think there's a

certain outsider perspective that people might say comes with Canadian songwriters, like the states would never be able to produce a Leonard Cohen or a Joni Mitchell or a Neil Young — just kind of idiosyncratic characters." But then he brakes and reverses. "But I don't know if I believe that."

Bejar could be talking about his own amiable, idiosyncratic self. Most of his sentences end with a little, upward, questioning lilt, giving his responses a way-relaxed, studiously casual, postgrad quality, clad as they are in contradictions, at times inspiring detailed analysis, but more often triggering mild arguments and arriving at good-humored dead ends. In other words, the man can talk complete paragraphs — or monosyllables. *Rubies*' last track, "Sick Priest Learns to Last Forever," for example, has been kicking around for five years. "It's kind of like the first song I tried doing, to break out a certain mold of Destroyer songs that I had unconsciously set up in the late '90s," Bejar explains. "It was a style of song where the language was mostly based on political or economic rhetoric and social expression and the occasional personal aside. 'Sick Priest' is kind of an exercise in a more free-flowing, imagistic song, which I was dead against back in my younger days, and I've since completely embraced that style of writing."

Maybe it's the sax, I venture. To these rust-belt-weaned ears, the new album sounds like urban East Coast rock of the '70s — à la not only Bowie but Springsteen and, say, the J. Geils Band.

"Wow, Peter Wolf," he sighs.

"That's cool. That's funny. I mean, I kind of have a soft spot for, uh, that kind of sounding band, though I don't have a soft spot for the songs that those people wrote. I like the '70s bar-rock feel, especially the laid-back afternoon variety."

Yeah, like when you're sitting at the bar, drinking cheap beer, watching the sun shoot through a vinyl padded door. "Sure."

Bejar can go for that scenario: Despite the fact that he will be playing All Tomorrow's Parties in England shortly after his SF date, you get the impression he can take or leave Destroyer and even the New Pornographers. (Since he moved away to his father's homeland of Spain a few years ago, he says, "My involvement is pretty minimal. I don't go to practices. I don't tour.") Who knows, when he gets some time off after ATP and the Pitchfork music festival in Chicago, he might even take his own "bad advice," the kind that's ingrained in Destroyer songs' "little pep talks," and fall back on a career shelving books at the public library. "Something part-time, maybe, that doesn't involve too much dealing with the public," he ponders playfully. "I'm good at alphabetizing stuff." **SFBG**

DESTROYER

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FILM SCHOOL BENEFITS

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AMADOU AND MARIAM

You have to be, er, deaf to be immune to the sight-free duo's vocal charms. Local mixologist Cheb i Sabbah opens. Fri/28, 9 p.m. Bimbo's 365 Club, 1025 Columbus, SF. \$25. (415) 474-0365.

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Check the chrome on custom cars and clear the (ear) wax with Fabulous Disaster, Fat Furies, Fleshes, Grannies, Teenage Harlets, and others. Sat/29, 2 p.m., Bay Area Motor Club, 1598 Custer, SF. Free. (415) 756-6409.

HALF-HANDED CLOUD

The Oakland church-sitters loop you in with *Halos and Lassos* (Asthmatic Kitty). Tues/2, 9:30 p.m., Hemlock Tavern, 1131 Polk, SF. \$5. (415) 923-0923. **SFBG**

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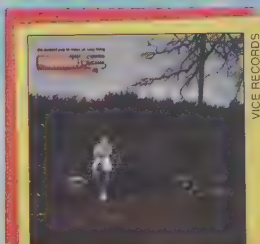
KALAS 12⁹⁸ Kalas CD

Featuring members of Sleep, High on Fire, Econochrist and more, Kalas is a recipe for sonic obliteration, a citadel of rock fury, the horned fist in your evening of debauchery.



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THE STREETS 13⁹⁸ The Hardest Way to Make an Easy Living CD

The new Streets album is a completely autobiographical record. There's love, loss, scandal, violence, sex, drugs and a whole load of bad behavior and regret.



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This is an exercise in translating well loved tracks into a different genre. *Exit Music* features Shawn Lee, RJD2, Matthew Herbert, Meshell N'Deegobello, Sia and more.



STARLIGHT MINTS 11⁹⁸ Drowaton CD

Starlight Mints are a group of four oddballs whose love for archetypal pop music and AM radio has provided a rock-solid foundation for a whole bunch of inspired weirdness. "Mints' songs are expansive affairs." — *Billboard*



NATACHA ATLAS 12⁹⁸ Mishmaoul CD

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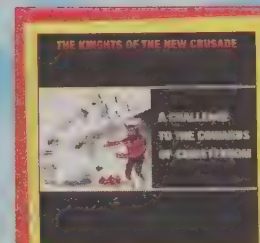
24 HOURS ON CRAIGSLIST 19⁹⁸ DVD

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ELECTROLUSH 2-CD 12⁹⁸ Various Artists SET

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Ruling party

Rising hip-hop star J-Stalin morphs from d-boy to Go Boy

By Garrett Caples
a&cletters@sfbg.com

J-Stalin knows how to make an entrance.

The first time we meet, in November 2004 at the Mekanix's recording studio in East Oakland, he enters nonchalantly, sporting an embroidered eye mask as though it were everyday wear. He walks up to me and shakes my hand. "I'm J-Stalin. I write and record two songs a day," he says with boyish pride.

I had a hard time retaining the notion the rapper *wasn't* a boy, for though he'd recently turned 21, his five-foot frame and preternatural baby face gave the impression of a raspy-voiced, blunt-puffing, Henny-swilling 14-year-old.

Yet he already had a storied past. A teen crack dealer, or "d-boy," from West Oakland's Cypress Village, Stalin was busted at age 17, spending the next 11 months on parole with weekends in juvenile hall. During this period, to both stave off boredom and possibly escape the multigenerational cycle of dope-dealing in his family, the young Jovan Smith began writing raps, finding out about the other Stalin in 11th-grade history class, and soaking up game at the Grill in Emeryville, where family friend DJ

Daryl had a recording studio.

After letting him watch for a year, Daryl put Stalin on a track — the result so impressed Daryl's frequent collaborator, Bay Area legend Richie Rich, he immediately commissioned a hook. Stalin would end up on three cuts on Rich's *Nixon Pryor Roundtree* (Ten-Six, 2002) and on two as a member of the Replacement Killers, a group that included Rich and Crestside Vallejo's PSD. Several more songs from this period had just surfaced on Rich's 2004 compilation, *Snatches, Grabs, and Takes* (Ten-Six), though Stalin had since defected to the Mekanix's production company, Zoo Entertainment. By the time we met, the highly productive crew had recorded most of Stalin's upcoming debut, *On Behalf of Tha Streets*.

HE'S NEXT

During the next 18 months, J-Stalin would generate no small amount of buzz, thanks in part to high-profile guest shots on projects like the Jacka's *The Jack Artist* (Artist, 2005) and the Delinquents' *Have Money Have Heart* (Dank or Die, 2005). Three advance tracks from *On Behalf* — "Party Jumpin'," featuring Jacka; a clean version of "Fuck You"; and an homage to the classic drum machine,



J-Stalin, né Jovan Smith, is on the go — hurling from a life of dope-dealing to rhyme-making.

"My 808" — have accumulated spins on KMEL, while the video for "My 808" has more than 20,000 plays on YouTube.com. Too \$hort says he's "next," E-40's dubbed him "the future," and major labels like Capitol and Universal are checking him hard.

To crown these achievements, Stalin's copped a coveted spot hosting an upcoming project for the Bay Area's mix-tape kings, DJ Devro and Impereal, alias the Demolition Men (see sidebar). Named after Stalin's penchant for calling the DJs at 7 a.m., ready to lay verses, *The Early Morning Shift* is a potent fusion of mix tape beats and Mekanix originals, laced with Stalin's melodic raps and distinctively raw, R&B-style vocals. Taking advantage of the industry's current structure, whereby you can drop a mix tape or two without compromising your "debut" album marketability, *The Early Morning Shift* will be most listeners' first chance to hear the prolific J-Stalin at length, in the company of stars like Keak, F.A.B., and the Team, as well as Stalin's Cypress Village crew, Livewire. Having generated some 60 tracks in the scant two weeks devoted to recording the disc, Stalin has literally given the Demolition Men more than they can handle: Talk of a "part two" is already in the air, though the DJs are still rushing to finish the first for an early-May release.

The Early Morning Shift comes at a pivotal time in J-Stalin's career. At the very least, the mix tape will warm up the Bay for *On Behalf*, which Zoo Entertainment plans to release independently in the next few months. With everywhere from *Rolling Stone*

to *USA Today* catching on to the Bay's hyphy/thizz culture, and major labels lurking in the wings, it's probably only a matter of time before Stalin gets a deal. But the rapper is adamant on signing only as part of the Mekanix's Zoo.

"We don't want an artist deal," he says. "If they give us a label deal, it'll work, because I ain't fittin' to sign no artist deal."

If this sounds a tad dictatorial in the mouth of so young a playa, consider that Stalin left a famous rapper's camp to work with a then-unknown production duo, a decision fraught with risk. But Stalin's instincts regarding his own artistic strengths are sound. He thrives on quantity, and the Mekanix's intense productivity suits Stalin's seemingly endless supply of rhymes and hooks. The duo's ominous, minor-key soundscapes provide perfect vehicles for the rapper's exuberant tales of West Oakland street hustle and melancholy, often poignant reflections on d-boy life.

"I used to listen to their beats," Stalin recalls, "and be like, 'Damn, them niggas got heat!' Plus they ain't no haters. I mean, I'm a leader; I ain't no follower. They allow me to still be me and fuck with them at the same time."

A few months ago I had a chance to watch this process in action, dropping by the studio as Dot and Tweed were putting the finishing touches on a hot new beat, one in tune with current hyphy trends yet retaining the dark urgency characteristic of the Mekanix sound.

"Let me get on it," Stalin says, as he usually does when he hears something he likes.

Sometimes Dot says yes, sometimes no, depending on their plans for a particular session. With a beat this fresh and radio-ready, one they could easily sell, Dot is noncommittal: "What you got for it?"

Without a pause Stalin breaks into a melody, accompanied by an impromptu dance: "That's my name / Don't wear it out, wear it out, wear it out..." Simple, catchy, the phrase totally works, and in less time than it takes to tell, he's in the booth laying down what promises to be the main single from *On Behalf*: "That's My Name."

Sitting behind the mixing board, Dot shoots me a smile, as if to say, "See why we work with this guy?"

ON THE GO MOVEMENT

With *The Early Morning Shift* about to drop, and *On Behalf* on the way, the only thing Stalin needs is his own catchword, à la hyphy or thizz. Enter the Go movement. Among recent innovations in Bay Area hip-hop slang is a certain use of the word go to indicate a kind of dynamic state of being, widely attributed to Stalin.

"I ain't sayin' I made it up, but somebody from West Oakland did," Stalin says. "Even before there was hella songs talkin' about Go and shit, that shit came from ecstasy pills. We used to say, 'Goddamn, you mother-fuckers go.' And then you refer to a female like, 'She go.' I swear it used to just be me and my niggas in the hood. I started fuckin' with the Mekanix and sayin' it at they place. Then, before I knew it, everybody was talking about Go."

Like thizz, Go quickly expanded beyond its drug-related origins, partly because it epitomizes so well the fast-

Bring on the Demolition Men

The Demolition Men, Impereal and DJ Devro, definitely didn't earn their reputation as the Bay Area's mix-tape kings by staying at home. As DJs the duo has performed together and separately at clubs all over the world, from China and Japan to South America and Europe. Native Spanish speakers — Impereal hails from the Colombian community in Queens, NY, while Devro is Southern California Creole — the pair also hosts *Demolition Men Radio*, broadcast Thursdays from 6 to 7 p.m. on Azul 106.3, a hip-hop station in Colombia's Medellín. Yet if you live in the Bay, you're most likely to see them on the street, selling mix tapes out of their backpacks.

"We're like a walking promotional retail machine," Impereal jokes. "If you don't buy a mix tape, you going home with a flyer."

Such determination, coupled with the DJs' high output (more than 30 releases since late 2003, including three volumes each of R&B and



reggaeton) and elaborate graphics, has finally kick-started the Bay's once lackadaisical mix tape scene.

An integral component of hip-hop in New York and the South, enabling new talents to be heard alongside vets and vets to issue bulletins with an immediacy unavailable to corporate labels, DJ-assembled mix tapes at their best are the ultimate in no-holds-barred hip-hop. Considered "promotional material" and usually printed in limited quantities, the discs are generally un-

CONTINUES ON PAGE 35

Ruling party CONT.

paced environment of rappers' lifestyles. Among the early cosigners of the Go movement is the Team, whose album *World Premiere* (Moedoe) dropped at the beginning of April. Not only did the group release a between-album mix tape and DVD called *Go Music* (Sicness.net, 2005), but Team member Kaz Kyzah has hooked up with Stalin and the Mekanix for a side project called the Go Boyz. First previewed on Go Music, on a track also featuring Mistah F.A.B., the Go Boyz have already recorded their self-titled debut, and Zoo is in talks with Moedoe about an eventual corelease.

"Where I'm from, we don't say, 'Go stupid.' 'Go dumb.' We just go," Kaz Kyzah says, explaining the term's appeal.

"Really, it's a way of life for us," he continues. "Me, Stalin, Dot, and Tweed, we'd be up all night just goin'. Every song was recorded at like four in the morning. Listening to some of the stuff now, you can feel it in the music."

GETTING IN EARLY

Since I began this piece, Stalin, it seems, has gotten even bigger, as word of *The Early Morning Shift* and the Go Boyz has spread through the

scene. People are suddenly lining up to work with him, and he's already committed to new projects with DJ Fresh, Beeda Weeda, the Gorilla Pits, and J-Nash, an R&B singer featured on Mistah F.A.B.'s upcoming *Yellow Bus Driver*. In a late-breaking development, E-40 confirms he intends to sign the Stalin/Beeda Weeda duo project to Sick Wid It Records.

During our interview, Stalin and I run by DJ Fresh's studio so J can lay a rhyme for an upcoming installment of Fresh's mix tape series, *The Tonight Show*. Another rapper, watching Stalin pull a verse out of thin air four bars at a time, is clearly awed: "He's amazing. I mean, he's on the records I buy."

Stalin takes it all in stride, though; aside from when I've watched him perform live, this is the first time I've ever seen someone react to him like he was a star. I get the feeling, however, it's far from the last. **SFBG**

J-STALIN

Fri/28, 10 p.m. doors
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\$20
(415) 621-1197
myspace.com/jstalinofficialpage

Demolition CONT.

cumbered by legal requirements like sample clearance.

Until recently, however, mix tapes weren't much of a factor here. While the Demolition Men are quick to pay homage to their local predecessors — like Mad Idiot, DJ Natural, and DJ Supreme — Natural acknowledges the mix tape scene was a bit dead before the Demolition Men began shaking it up.

"Out here DJs were concentrating on clubs," Natural says. "Then they started putting stuff out constantly." Now there's sufficient trade in mix tapes for Natural to move his formerly virtual business, Urban Era, to brick-and-mortar digs at 5088 Mission, making it the Bay's only all-mix tape music store. Yet even with increased competition, he notes, the Demolition Men still routinely sell out.

In addition to their up-tempo release schedule, the success of the Demolition Men's mixes might be attributed to the conceptual coherence they bring to their projects. While they do put together general mixes featuring more mainstream fare — such as the *Out the Trunk* series, which boasts exclusives from Ludacris — the duo's hottest projects tend to tap into the Bay's reservoir of talent. Aside from their multi-

faceted *Best of the Bay* series, the Demolition Men have released mix tapes hosted by Bay Area artists like Balance, Celski, El Dorado Red, and the Team.

Currently the Demolition Men's most successful disc has been their most ambitious: *Animal Planet*, not so much a mix tape as music cinema, starring the Mob Figaz' Husalah and Jacka. A mighty 34 tracks — featuring production by Rob Lo, Traxamillion, and the Mekanix, and appearances by F.A.B., Keak, and Pretty Black — *Animal Planet* is an incredible collection of almost entirely exclusive, original material, seriously blurring the boundary between mix tape and album. Its success has encouraged bold undertakings, like *The Early Morning Shift* with J-Stalin and *Block Tested, Hood Approved*, a mix tape/DVD starring Fillmore rapper Big Rich. "I guess we're taking the mix tape to the next level," Devro says. **(GC) SFBG**

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THURSDAY • MAY 11 • 8PM
JEFFREY LUCK LUCAS
 Jeffrey Luck Lucas creates music that is alternately slow, cinematic, tragic, intensely lustful and lovely. *Hell Then Divine* is an urban/country casino renaissance classically composed by a modern day virtuoso. — *Mosh Magazine*

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 Jolie Holland has a voice that attempts to transcend the new and encompass the old through the medium of American music. Don't miss this San Francisco darling in a performance supporting her new album, *Springtime Can Kill You*, out May 6th!

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MUSIC

Love is blond

Sweden's Sounds are dying to sink their pop hooks into the kids in America

By Jimmy Draper
 > a&cletters@sfbg.com

"I don't want to be compared to Blondie all the time, but I can absolutely see why people do it," the Sounds' Maja Ivarsson says.

Calling from a tour stop in Albuquerque, the charismatic Swede readily acknowledges that as the blond vocalist of an infectious, synth-driven band that's heavily influenced by '80s music, she'll never escape the shadow of Debbie Harry. Unlike most of today's retro revivalists, however, who are so desperate not to appear derivative that they barely admit to even their most obvious influences — Interpol and the Killers, you're fooling no one — Ivarsson doesn't mind the comparison. In fact, she takes it as a compliment.

"The Blondie thing is flattering because it's a great band," she continues. "At the same time, I can see why people want to be their own band. But I think it's kind of silly to get upset about it, because every band that you've been listening to since you were a kid has been compared to something before that. It's the way it works."

Of course, the Sounds aren't the second coming of Blondie — they're even better. On 2003's *Living in America* (Scratchie/New Line), the Swedish new wave sensations sound like they spent years deconstructing their favorite early-'80s hits, cribbing notes from Missing Persons, Kim Wilde, and yes, Blondie, to create a danceable pop-rock album so outlandishly catchy it sounds less like a band's debut than a collection of greatest hits. If that seems too good to be true — and really, songs like "Mine for Life" and "Dance with Me" kind of are — it helps to remember they hail from the country with probably the most hit-makers per capita in pop history, including ABBA, A-ha, Ace of Base, and Max Martin.

"We've been brought up with great, great melodies and songwriting," Ivarsson says. "We're just suckers for hit music, even music like that Kelly Clarkson song, 'Since U Been Gone' — it has a great hook! Maybe it's not your favorite artist, but if you took that hook and added your shit to it, you could build a great pop song out of it."

Surprisingly, they weren't always so smitten with such accessible songwriting. Formed in 1998 while still in high school, the Sounds started out playing six-minute rock epics that Ivarsson

describes as "dark and weird and very arrgh." When those songs failed to find them a fan base, however, they decided to shift direction and try their hands at new wave. "We were just like, 'Oh, dude, *this* is the way we're going to sound!" she recalls. "It was so much more fun. It was cheesy, but it was good cheese!"

They weren't the only ones who thought so. In 2002, after the Sounds signed a major-label deal with Warner Sweden, *Living in America* went plat-



Keep your tired new wave sexpot name-checks to yourself: The Sounds wanna be respected for their minds! And, oh yeah, their music.

inum and earned them a Swedish Grammy before getting released state-side a year later on James Iha's Scratchie Records. Tours with the Strokes and Foo Fighters, as well as a stint on the 2004 Vans Warped Tour, ensued, along with massive word of mouth surrounding the band's glamorous, adrenalin-spiking live show. Unfortunately, the Sounds' success here still fell far short of what they have back home.

That may change with the recent release of *Dying to Say This to You* (Scratchie/New Line). Helmed by Jeff Saltzman, who produced the Killers' *Hot Fuss* (Island), and mixed by Paul Q. Kolderie (Radiohead, Hole), the Sounds' second album is an even better blitzkrieg of retro wrist-pumping anthems — glitter-punk riffs! Euro-disco keyboard lines! Ivarsson's tough-gal taunts! — that's so relentlessly

catchy it practically dares America not to listen. And while many people who've tired of the '80s revival will do just that, it's their loss: Stadium-ready stompers such as "Queen of Apology" and dance floor confessions like "Tony the Beat" prove that sharp hooks — even when rooted in Reagan-era nostalgia — never go out of style.

Why should it matter, then, that we've heard all this before? The Sounds may not be today's most innovative rock band, but they're one of the most efficient when it comes to creating exuberant, unabashedly poppy rock. So it's best to follow Ivarsson's lead and shrug off the fact that her band will probably always be seen as Blondie wannabes. They're not, of course, but nor are they overly concerned with anyone else's notions of

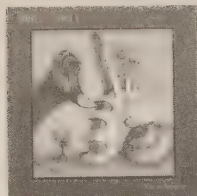
originality, authenticity, and indie credibility. Rather, quite refreshingly, the Sounds simply want to show as many people a good time as possible.

"We don't think it's anything to be ashamed of if you're a great pop band — pop means popular, and it's a pretty good sign if you're popular," Ivarsson says, laughing. "In the beginning, only hip bands and elite people knew about us, and they were like, 'This is my band.' Of course, they don't like us anymore, but that's OK. As long as the people like us, then we're happy. We just want to get you down." **SFBG**

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grooves



BUILT TO SPILL
You in Reverse
(Warner Bros.)

In between spins of Built to Spill's long-awaited *You in Reverse*, I took some time to revisit 1997's *Perfect from Now On*. I discovered Built to Spill late, having preferred Steve Malkmus's sugar-rush nuggets to Doug Martsch's twisty epics in my teenage years. Nearly a decade later, *Perfect* seems monolithic: a quintessential document of those strange, formative years when mopey, unpackaged indie rockers released albums on major labels.

For what seems like a long time, though, the band has been overly prone to indulgent and, worse, meaningless guitar wanderings. Their latest release ditched the thick overdubs of previous records, instead presenting songs with a looser, back-to-basics production style. Several successes here emphasize Built to Spill's core strengths. The fist-pumping opener, "Goin' Against Your Mind", for example, once again demonstrates the band's knack for stretching melodies out for maximum drama. A nice suite of summer songs follows this blastoff, all with Martsch in good voice and sweet, casual hooks aplenty.

Despite the bright beginning, the album's saggy middle suffers for its numbing Crazy Horse-inspired riffing. Songs like "Gone" and "Mess with Time" run together to form a shapeless sea of jam. Martsch throws another couple of effortless melodies our way before the disc comes to a close, leaving *You* as something of a stopgap — enough to remind us why we fell for the band in the first place even if it doesn't touch the band's defining work. (Max Goldberg)

ESSEX GREEN *Cannibal Sea* (Merge)

On *Cannibal Sea*, the Essex Green's escape-minded third album of winsome, well-turned-out pop songs, ships sail, maps are studied, travel plans are hatched or foiled, and Sasha Bell — who shares songwriting duties with Chris Ziter and Jeff Baron — sings about a "mythic paradise" and the "rainy side of Elsinore," her voice like a sheet of clear glass. Traces of the forlorn in gorgeously harmonized songs like "Sin City" fail to mar the cheery satisfaction of pop perfection. (Lynn Rapoport)

May 6, 9 p.m., Rickshaw Stop, 155 Fell, SF. \$10–\$12. (415) 861-2011

VARIOUS ARTISTS *Idol Tryouts 2* (Ghostly International)

This dual-disc compilation from Ann Arbor, Mich.'s Ghostly International and sister label Spectral Sound, pulsates with pinprick minimalist escapades and dream pop debauchery on a vibrant dance floor. *Idol Tryouts 2* is ripe with slick avant-pop (Mobius Band), hiccupping microhouse (Lawrence), and fizzling ambient storms (Kiln). (Chris Sabbath)



MATES OF STATE
Bring It Back
(Barsuk)

Probably the most personal of all Mates of State's albums to date, the fourth full-length by husband and wife duo Jason Hammel (vocals, drums) and Kori Gardner (vocals, organ) reads like a diary. In the danceable, bass-heavy "For the Actor," sugary, layered vocals collide over electric keyboards and steady drums. "I remember when it poured / And you sang to me in summer / It's a fantasy," they harmonize.

It doesn't take a rocket scientist to realize this album was made more for them than for their fans. With each track, *Bring It Back* begins to take on the quality of a monologue. On the intro song, "Think Long," Gardner's sultry voice takes center stage, with Hammel filling in the sonic space with punchy harmonies. Collaborating for the first time with producer Bill Racine — who has worked with the likes of the Flaming Lips and Mogwai — the duo's sound progresses from pop confections heavy on the organ and harmonies, as in "Fraud in the '80s," to beautifully sparse ballads like "Nature and the Wreck." Still, by never wandering too far from their signature style of layered vocals and poppy keyboards, the duo stays in a musical safe zone, and while that's not a bad place to be, it's not a memorable one either. (Stephanie Laemola)

MATES OF STATE

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Great American Music Hall
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local grooves



POREST
Tourrortists!
(Abduction)

The squirm factor on the new album by Oakland's Porest is pretty much off the scale — and not just because of the Sept. 11-mocking cover or the proclamation inside the liner notes that reads, "God bless the terrorists and their families."

Porest is the long-running solo project of Mono Pause and Neung Phak member (and Iraqi American) Mark Gergis, and while it follows in the sound-collage tradition of Negativland, it wields a far more pointedly political edge than anything those relatively merry pranksters have done.

Its thorny subject matter aside, *Tourrortists!* is a masterful blend of found-sound collage and more song-oriented fare such as Middle Eastern synth rocker "Eye of the Leopard." Gergis mixes samples, electronics, live instruments, and vocals in a seamless fashion, and even manages to put the oft-abused text-to-speech software gimmick to good use on the darkly hilarious "Let's Roll": "When I masturbate, I think of Bin Laden / And he's been dead since 2001... but those tapes they keep showing are so much fun," the robotic voices intone. Yikes.

I don't claim to understand every angle Gergis is working, but I admire his bravery in releasing an ambiguous, provocative album that could easily get him lynched in most parts of the country. (Will York)

PELOTON *Peloton* (self-released)

Peloton's self-titled EP is a classy, sassy, and altogether addictive affair of hook-laden atmospheric pop rock. Miyako Ueki's catchy keyboard melodies and Brian Jackson's soft, sensitive vocal style are like spoonfuls of sugar that allow the subtly sarcastic lyrics to go down with ease. Standout tracks include "Out of Mind" and "Static Line." (Jenny Miyasaki)

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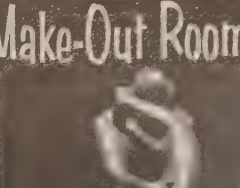
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A swami says, "No whammies," and a floatload of belly dancers lets it all hang out at last year's How Weird Street Faire.

PHOTO COURTESY OF WWW.HOWWEIRD.ORG



Warm fuzzies

By Marke B.
 > superego@sfbg.com

SUPER EGO Fur suit! Is there anything better? The darling buds of May are peeping through, the beautiful ladies of the Bay are showing out their zirconia belly-bling, and clubby bears are waking up from long, wet winter naps with raging hankerings for fun (as opposed to raging hankerings for little girls in Appalachia). "Lhudely sing god-dam!" the poets shout, "it's spring & all." And for once they're right, you know? I feel downright *exuberant*. The city stretches out its arms, scratches its stubbly ass, and yawns. What's for breakfast, Goldilocks? A party, dude. A freakin' party.

So what could be more natural than to throw on a big, fuzzy purple costume and break-dance in public on a sunny afternoon?

At least that's what I'm hoping. Do you know the guy I'm talking about? He's at almost every street fair, hopping around like Jiffy Pop, cute as a Great Grape Ape. You know spring's really arrived when you see him making the scene on the sidewalk, a violaceous blur, all velutinous and shit. I've had a super boy crush on him for years now. We once connected briefly at Queer Pride when I was Gaydor the Cockodile, but it would never work, I realized. A furry Grapesaurus and a drunken, gay green reptile — the time had not yet come for our illicit kind of love. Sigh.

Still, my heart beats faster when I see his head spins zagging down

the pavement, and I'm wishing that he'll send me all atwitter at the upcoming How Weird Street Faire. Not that it'll be easy to spot him, mind. The joint's a jungle of fabulous freaks, and that's just how we like it. In all its fur-suited, stilt-walking, fire-twirling, rave-a-licious glory, the How Weird's in its seventh year as the kickoff of San Francisco's outdoor festival season, but this year seems to be the first it has appeared on so many party folks' radar screens. There are a couple good reasons for that.

The first is that How Weird was always a kind of stealth fair, dedicated to both the underground psytrance scene and the techno-hippie notion of global peace through half-naked dancing. The joy of it was that one minute you'd be strolling through SoMa on the way to a beer

bust, when — bam! — there'd be several blocks of booming Goa beats and shirtless gyrators waving glow sticks in the daytime. It was like you stepped through a quasi-magical doorway into the mid-'90s. The fair didn't promote itself much, which made it seem spontaneous and comfy. This year it's stepped up its outreach efforts and expanded its offerings, with seven stages of local floor-thumpers manning the tables and a Mermaid Parade up Market Street featuring art cars, wacky "mobile works of a nautical nature" (i.e., pirate ship floats), and some sort of undelineated May Day celebration of the spring equinox. Don't quote me, but I'm guessing it'll somehow involve nude pixies.

The second reason is that many folks affect being allergic to such things. "What is it supposed to be,

some sort of daffy collision of Burning Man and the Renaissance Faire?" they wonder, retching into their lattes. Well, kind of. The guy behind it all is indeed Brad Olsen, he of the legendary, way-back-when Consortium of Collective Consciousness parties and a prime Burning Man mover. His organization, Peace Tours, is dedicated to "achieving world peace through technology, community, and connectedness," which, as mentioned above, pretty much plays to woowoo shamanism type. (The fair even has booths selling "peace pizza." I shit you not.) And, of course, all medieval jousting wannabes are welcome — as are their jangly jester caps.

But the time for trendy uppitiness about such things has passed. There are no big clubs in the city left where you can get down with thousands of freaks anymore, and the millennial explosion of street protests has keyed more people in to the power, if not exactly the purpose, of vibing with crowds who share their general intentions. As the drag queen said, it's all about expression. And these days (has it really come to this?) any expression of hope and peace — especially if there's beer available — is very greatly appreciated.

So please, purple fuzzy boy, if you're reading this — please come down to the How Weird Street Faire. After all, it's spring. We need you. **SFBG**

HOW WEIRD STREET FAIR

May 7, noon–8 p.m.
 12th Street and South Van Ness, SF
 \$10 donation, \$5 with costume, free for kids
www.howweird.org

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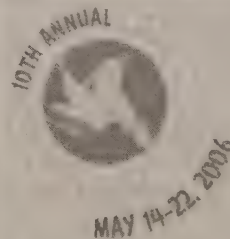
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For more festival info, visit mcmf.org. For advertising opportunities in our program guide, contact 415-255-3100.

GUARDIAN

REVIEW 6

The revolution will be anthologized

REVIEW 7

Kate Braverman's unruly memoir

READINGS 10

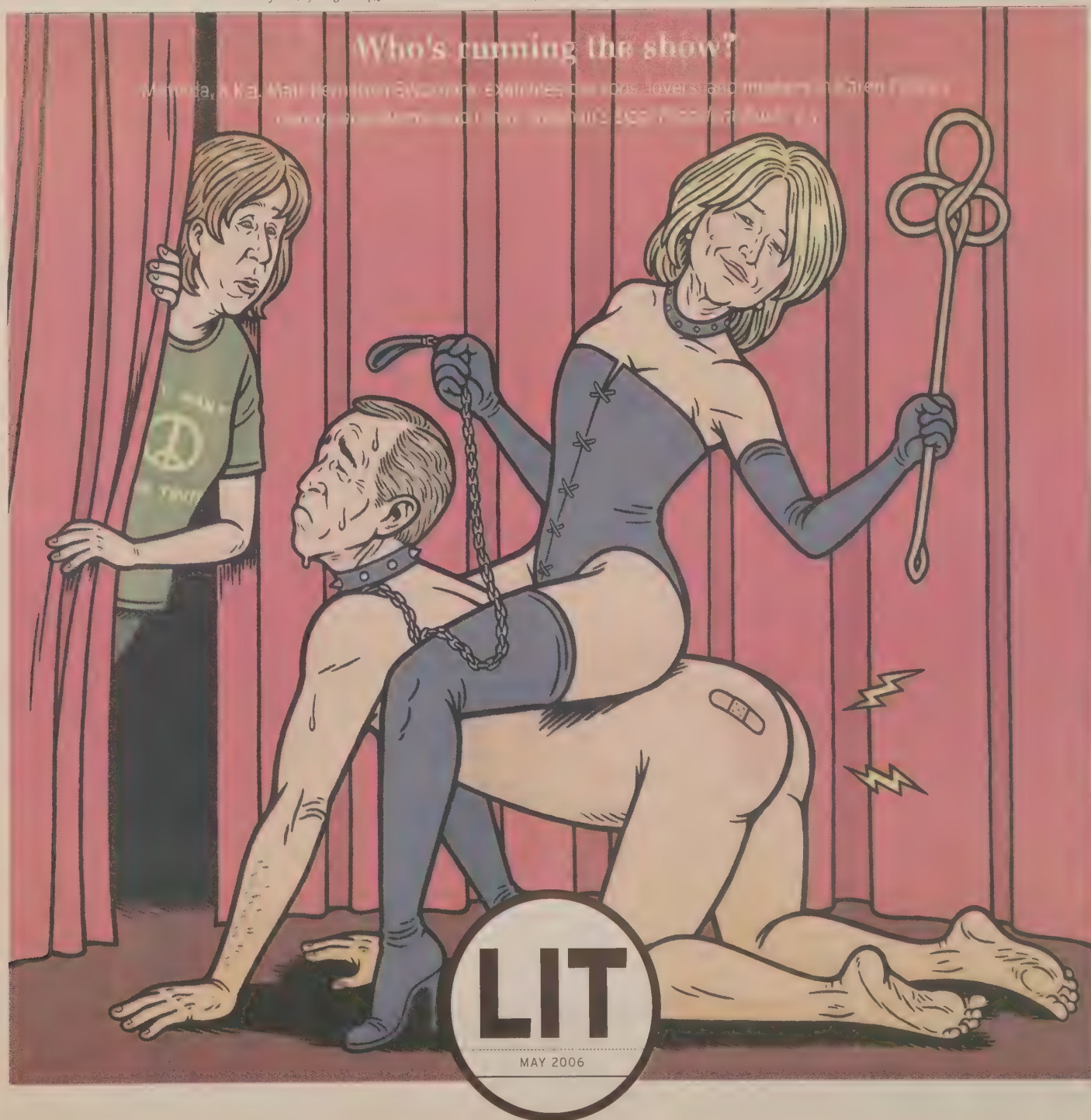
Leslie Feinberg, Peter Orner, Ariel Gore, and writers with wigs

HOUSE HUNTER 11

Kapow! to the people

SHORTS 8: *American Theocracy*, by Kevin Phillips | *A Scarecrow's Bible*, by Martin Hyatt | *American Movie Critics*, edited by Phillip Lopate

Weird California, by Greg Bishop, Joe Oesterle, and Mike Marinacci | *God's Silence*, by Franz Wright | *Hell in a Handbasket*, by Tom Tomorrow



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Note: beginning in May, all Cody's events are listed in chronological order only, rather than chronologically by location.

AT CODY'S ~ MAY 2006

Please note both time and location for all our events!

MONDAY, MAY 1

ERIC SCHLOSSER will **CHEW ON THIS**, a no-holds-barred look at the fast-food industry for young readers.
7:00PM, King Middle School Auditorium (1781 Rose St., Berkeley)

TONY HENDRA transitions to fiction in **THE MESSIAH OF MORRIS AVENUE**
7:30PM, Telegraph Ave./Berkeley

OPARANTU CHATTERJEE celebrates life in the Indian backcountry with **ENGLISH/AUGUST**
6:00PM Stockton St./SF

TUESDAY, MAY 2

KAREN FINLEY invests fantasy with satire in **GEORGE & MARTHA**
7:30PM Telegraph Ave./Berkeley

RICH COHEN brings us his bittersweet, hilarious **SWEET AND LOW: A Family Story**
6:00PM Stockton St./SF

WEDNESDAY, MAY 3

MARC GOLDYNE and NANCY WATTEN COOPERSMITH will delight young readers with **FRANKIE & THE PHOENIX** the story of Frankie, the portable fire hydrant, and the fireboot Phoenix's heroics after the Loma Prieta earthquake.
6:00PM Stockton St./SF

MOLLY O'NEILL comes to the plate with **MOSTLY TRUE: A Memoir of Family, Food, and Baseball**
7:00PM Fourth St./Berkeley

KAMRAN NAZEER reveals the lives of autistic men and women in **SEND IN THE IDIOTS: Stories from the Other Side of Autism**
7:30PM Telegraph Ave./Berkeley

THURSDAY, MAY 4

SANDY TOLAN and CYNTHIA GORNEY discuss **THE LEMON TREE**, Tolan's book about the ravages of war and the hope of Friendship.
7:00PM Fourth St./Berkeley

DIANA ABU-JABER charms with her memoir **THE LANGUAGE OF BAKLAVA**
7:30PM Telegraph Ave./Berkeley

FRIDAY, MAY 5

ANDREW ROSS looks at the controversial issue of outsourcing to China in **FAST BOAT TO CHINA: Corporate Flight and the Consequences of Free Trade**
12:30PM Telegraph Ave./Berkeley

HIP HOP'S IMPACT ON THE AMERICAN FAMILY
How has hip hop helped or hurt young persons' ideas about what family is—or is not? Join the conversation in another of Cody's occasional hip hop forums.
7:30PM Telegraph Ave./Berkeley

SATURDAY, MAY 6

Astronomer KEN CROSWELL presents the full glory of the Sun's ten planets in **TEN WORLDS**. With slides for the whole family!
7:30PM Telegraph Ave./Berkeley

SUNDAY, MAY 7

UC BERKELEY EXTENSION READING
Every spring, students in UC Berkeley Extension's writing programs finish the semester with readings. Cody's is delighted to again welcome poets, essayists, memoirists, and fiction writers.
4:00PM Fourth St./Berkeley

DEVYANI SALTZMAN recounts **SHOOTING WATER: A Memoir of Second Chances, Family, and Filmmaking**
4:00 PM Telegraph Ave./Berkeley

MONDAY, MAY 8

MADEIRA ALBUQUERQUE SANTA CLARA CONVENTION CENTER THEATER
How should the US deal with religious extremists—and how much influence should the Christian right have over foreign policy? Former Secretary of State Madeleine Albright calls for a paradigm shift in **THE MIGHTY AND THE ALMIGHTY: Reflections on America, God, and World Affairs**. Co-sponsored by the Commonwealth Club of California. Tickets: \$15 members, \$25 non-members, \$7 students, www.commonwealthclub.org or 800-847-7730. 11:15 AM, check-in, 12:00, program, 1:00, book signing. Santa Clara Convention Center Theater, 5001 Great America Parkway, Santa Clara (map: www.santacloara.org/gettingaround/driving.htm)

STEVE ALMOND & JULIANNA BAGGOTT team up to deliver **WHICH BRINGS ME TO YOU: A Novel in Confessions**
6:00PM Stockton St./SF

PETER SCHRAG takes on the big issues in **CALIFORNIA: America's High-Stakes Experiment**
7:30PM Telegraph Ave./Berkeley

TUESDAY, MAY 9

PETER HESSLER, author of *River Town*, tells of **ORACLE BONES: A Journey Between China's Past and Present**
7:30PM Telegraph Ave./Berkeley

ANASTASIA ASHMAN and JENNIFER EATON GÖKMEIN sweep away the layers of intrigue enveloping Turkey with **TALES FROM THE EXPAT HAREM: Foreign Women in Modern Turkey**
7:00PM Stockton St./SF

WEDNESDAY, MAY 10

IRIS KRASNOW shows adult daughters how to make peace with their mothers in **I AM MY MOTHER'S DAUGHTER: Making Peace with Mom—Before It's Too Late**
12:30PM Stockton St./SF

SHIRIN EBADI, winner of the 2003 Nobel Peace Prize, offers a vivid picture of the struggles of one woman against the system in **IRAN AWAKENING: A Memoir of Revolution and Hope**
Tickets: UCB faculty and students: free; \$15 non-members; \$7, co-sponsors; \$5, non-UCB students (with ID), www.itsyourworld.org, 415-293-4600, registration@wacsf.org. 11:30AM, check-in, 12:00, program, 1:00, book signing, 155 Divisadero Hall (near Sather Gate) UC Berkeley

DANIEL HANDLER returns after a short little spell writing as "Lemony Snicket" with his magical new novel **ADVERBS**
7:30PM Telegraph Ave./Berkeley

THURSDAY, MAY 11

CORNEUA READ entertains with her debut mystery novel **A FIELD OF DARKNESS**
7:00PM Fourth St./Berkeley

SETH LLOYD, who designed the first feasible quantum computer, describes his work in **PROGRAMMING THE UNIVERSE: A Quantum Computer Scientist Takes on the Cosmos**
7:30PM Telegraph Ave./Berkeley

FRIDAY, MAY 12

We welcome AMÉLIE NOTHOMB, France's "literary lioness" and her most recent book **THE BOOK OF PROPER NAMES**
6:00PM Stockton St./SF

JAMES HOWARD KUNSTLER delivers a lucid and straightforward glimpse at global changes in **THE LONG EMERGENCY: Surviving the End of Oil, Climate Change, and Other Converging Catastrophes of the Twenty-First Century**
7:30PM Telegraph Ave./Berkeley

SATURDAY, MAY 13

MIRIAM ENGELBERG offers a darkly humorous account of one woman's battle with illness with **CANCER MADE ME A SHALLOWER PERSON: A Memoir in Comics**
4:00PM Fourth St./Berkeley

YOUTH SPEAKS
Join Youth Speaks to celebrate the publication of six new books by Youth Speaks poets from First Word Press. This evening's program is hosted by ADAM MANSBACH, author of *Angry Black White Boy*
7:00PM Telegraph Ave./Berkeley

SUNDAY, MAY 14

An afternoon for horror fans! BRIAN KEENE and J.F. GONZALEZ horrify with their latest works **SURVIVOR and THE CONQUEROR WORMS**
3:00PM Telegraph Ave./Berkeley

MONDAY, MAY 15

SIMON SCHAMA asks a single huge question in his new book, **ROUGH CROSSINGS: BRITAIN, THE SLAVES, AND THE AMERICAN REVOLUTION**. If you were black in America at the start of the Revolutionary War, whom would you want to win?
7:30PM Telegraph Ave./Berkeley

DAVID KORTEN author of *When Corporations Rule the World*, advocates for "Earth Community" in his new book **THE GREAT TURNING**. Tickets at Cody's: \$10 advance, \$13 at door. 7:30PM at First Congregational Church of Oakland, 2501 Harrison Street, Oakland

TUESDAY, MAY 16

SHELBY STEELE explores race relations in **WHITE GUILT: How Blacks & Whites Together Destroyed the Promise of the Civil Rights Era**
7:30PM Telegraph Ave./Berkeley

ARIEL GORE brings her motley crew of musicians and puppeteers here to perform, entice, and entertain on the subjects of her new book **THE TRAVELING DEATH AND RESURRECTION SHOW**
6:00PM Stockton St./SF

WEDNESDAY, MAY 17

DONNA LEON opens doors to hidden Venice in her new Commissario Brunetti mystery, **THROUGH A GLASS, DARKLY**
12:30PM Stockton St./SF

MICHELLE GOLDBERG investigates the growing influence of dominionism with her brave new book **KINGDOM COMING: The Rise of Christian Nationalism**
7:30PM Telegraph Ave./Berkeley

THURSDAY, MAY 18

JORDAN FISHER SMITH enlightens us with his account of unholy truths lurking amid the American great outdoors in **NATURE NERVE**
6:00PM Stockton St./SF

ALVIN TOFFLER, author of *Future Shock*, turns our attention to the revolution in wealth sweeping our planet with his new book **REVOLUTIONARY WEALTH**
7:30PM Telegraph Ave./Berkeley

FRIDAY, MAY 19

PAUL RIECKOFF, the first Iraq War veteran to speak publicly about the Bush Administration's mishandling of the war in Iraq, gives us his account of the situation in **CHASING GHOSTS: A Soldier's Fight for America from Baghdad to Washington**
7:30PM Telegraph Ave./Berkeley

TRICYCLE Magazine is the preeminent Buddhist magazine in the US. Join contributors and editor Andy Cooper for conversation.
7:00PM Stockton St./SF

SATURDAY, MAY 20

USA BROWN shows young children and us all **HOW TO BE**, her silly and significant debut picture book
11:00AM Fourth St./Berkeley

MATTHIEU RICARD, a Buddhist monk, presents **HAPPINESS**, a straightforward assessment of how to find true and lasting happiness
7:30PM Telegraph Ave./Berkeley

MONDAY, MAY 22

JAMES TWITCHELL lifts the curtain on male haunts with **WHERE MEN HIDE**
7:30PM Telegraph Ave./Berkeley

TUESDAY, MAY 23

PETER MARESCA celebrates **LITTLE NEMO IN SLUMBERLAND**, the greatest comic strip of its day and its creator Winsor McCay.
6:00PM Stockton St./SF

SARAH SCHULMAN explodes stereotypes with the reissue of her daring 1992 novel **EMPATHY**
7:30PM Telegraph Ave./Berkeley

WEDNESDAY, MAY 24

LESLEE LARSON traces the intersecting paths of five people in her debut novel, **SUPSTREAM**
7:30PM Telegraph Ave./Berkeley

THURSDAY, MAY 25

WOMAN'S BEST FRIEND: WOMEN WRITERS ON THE DOGS IN THEIR LIVES
Editor MEGAN McMorris brings us a fabulous new anthology with funny and heartwarming essays from 26 woman writers from different walks of life. Come celebrate your own wonderful connections with canine friends!
7:30PM Telegraph Ave./Berkeley

FRIDAY, MAY 26

JENNY KURZWEIL tell the stories of the real people behind the farmers' market and organic food industries in **FIELDS THAT DREAM: A Journey to the Roots of Our Food**
7:30PM Telegraph Ave./Berkeley

TUESDAY, MAY 30

TERRI JENITZ investigates the event that shattered her life in **STRANGE PIECE OF PARADISE**
7:30PM Telegraph Ave./Berkeley

WEDNESDAY, MAY 31

SCOTT ANDERSON brings us a microcosm of unintended consequences in his novel **THE MOONLIGHT HOTEL**
7:30PM Telegraph Ave./Berkeley

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Eminent mediocrities

MARGINALIA

By Paul Reidinger › paulr@sfbg.com

An impertinent question, may it please the court, about celebrity: If everyone wants to be a star, as Hal Niedzviecki suggests is the current slant of popular culture in his scorchingly bratty new book, *Hello, I'm Special: How Individuality Became the New Conformity* (City Lights, \$15.95 paper) — if our society consists of “ever-increasing numbers of people clamoring to turn their lives into sitcoms, reality-TV specials, underground video epics, confessional stand-up comedy routines” — then who will agree to be starred to, or at, or upon? Who will bear the burden of being dazzled by the wondrous presence of our countless wondrous individuals?

And an ample supply of the bedazzleable is essential to the whole mechanism of stardom and celebrity, let there be no doubt. For what could possibly be the point of being a star in a social firmament filled with other uniquely glittering stars, each an affront to one's own specialness and each annoyed by the twinkling presence of all the others? That would be like being rich in a world where everyone else is rich and there is no one to clear the Limoges china or hose down the stables or have the lamb's wool rugs in the Bentley dry-cleaned; a world of countless entitled people exactly like oneself, idling over snifters of Armagnac while hoping that some flunky or factotum might turn up to gaze in awe at his or her betters. Celebrity and wealth have no meaning unless there are large numbers of people from whom those prizes can be withheld. Exclusivity implies the power to exclude, and the power to exclude requires excludables, the more the merrier, at least for those doing the excluding.

The key to making this kind of system work, as any casino owner or producer of *American Idol* knows, is the Lotto principle: the rare and quite arbitrary, but sensational, payoff to some schmo who is duly lifted into the clouds of pop-cult divinity as a sign to the masses. Such elevations become legendary, word of mouth spreads, the faithful's faith is renewed, and quarters keep clinking into the slot machines. For it is a well-known fact that sooner or later everyone wins the lottery, becomes famous on television, and gets to sleep with Brad Pitt and/or J-Lo — or, if not everyone, at least me, me, me. It is merely a matter of time and persistence; my ship is just over the horizon, like that aircraft carrier Bush landed on.

The link between celebrity and mediocrity is often a comic one — Madonna cannot sing, therefore she is one of our most famous singers

— but in our mediocrity-worshipping culture of Coca-Cola and Vin Diesel movies, of people famous for being famous, there is nothing to do but accept such laughs as we are offered. The link between celebrity and civilized life, however, is more problematic. Celebrities generally have money, and this at least is good, for money confers freedom and wards off poverty, and poverty is not glamorous, despite boho posings to the contrary.

But one cannot help noticing, from glances at the tabloids while waiting in line at the supermarket, that celebrity lives are often unsettled: There are trips to fat farms and drug rehab centers, sloppy divorces, ignominious busts while keeping dubious company in the front seats of cars, and the occasional squalid trial — and much, much more. This nonfamous person, for one, can't help wondering if such woes aren't somehow related to living in the public eye, with cameras everywhere and every foible and misstep subject to exposure and shrill discussion. *Be careful what you wish for*, teaches the old adage, *because you might get it*. Celebrity might be priceless, but it does carry a price.

As a writer, I have often found myself darkly marveling at the desire for fame that seems to motivate so many other writers: the wish not that readers read the words one has written but that crowds turn out to see the writer in the flesh at readings or listen to the writer gab on the radio in response to inane questions. The whole point of writing, it seems to me, is to say what one wishes to say without having to be present to say it. Writing presupposes a certain distance between writer and reader and — at least for some writers; at least for this one — can only be accomplished in private, as a private person, as a ghost of sorts, an attentive spirit moving unnoticed among his more clamorous fellows.

Once upon a time in America, privacy was a prized value, and it was possible for a justice of the US Supreme Court to make what I would call the unremarkable point that the “right to be let alone,” as Louis Brandeis put it (in *Olmstead v. New York*, 277 US 438 [1928]), was “the right most valued by civilized men.” Brandeis was worried about the intrusions of government, of course — about such unauthorized eavesdropping on the citizenry. What does it mean for our civilization, I wonder, that in our time stories of officialdom's blatant criminality come and go with barely a media or judicial ripple, while the maneuverings to secure a berth on *Road Rules* become ever more cutthroat? Knock knock, hello, anybody home? **SFBG**

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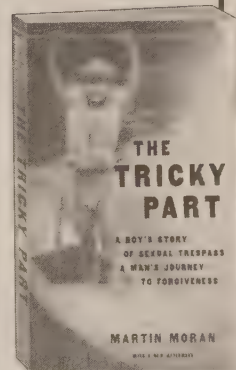
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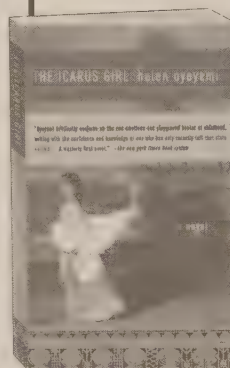
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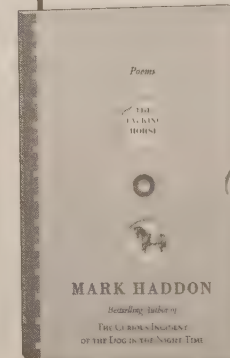
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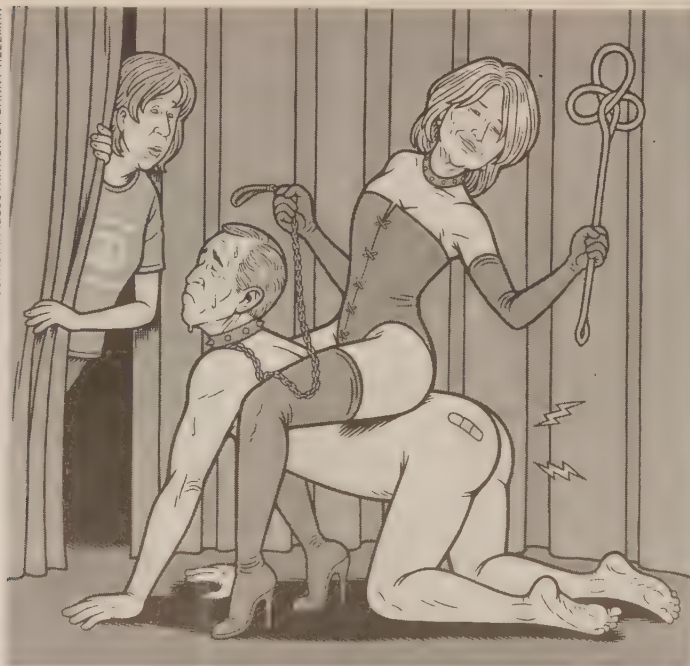
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The poems are marbled with scenes
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fame and death. They will whet
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follow-up.” —*Publishers Weekly*

ANCHOR

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VINTAGE



Sons and mothers

Martha, Cindy, and our headless head of state

By Mattilda, a.k.a. Matt Bernstein Sycamore
 > lit@sfbg.com

ESSAY In *George and Martha*, the new book by performance artist-provocateur Karen Finley, the George in question declares, "I want to destroy the world. Destroy America. Destroy our economy. Destroy young happy Americans with a future. Destroy culture. I enjoy seeing youth die." Turn two pages forward and behold what appears to be a watercolor interpretation of Edward Munch's *The Scream* — it is indeed George W. Bush screaming in the picture, standing in front of a motel bed with sheets way under a 200 thread count. It's the President Hotel, of course, where Martha Stewart and the GWB are meeting as part of a decades-long clandestine affair, this time on the eve of Martha's scheduled prison sojourn. Turn another page and behold a porcelain poodle lamp with the shade decorated in flowers, clearly a design by a Martha on the verge of a nervous breakdown.

George is still screaming: "Bin Laden is in me! Bin Laden is hiding in me! I swallowed bin Laden." If Mommy Martha must soothe Baby George with a searchlight up his ass, then perhaps we can excuse the mother of our nation for declaring, "I should have called my magazine *Dying*. *Martha Stewart Dying*."

But wait: Is Martha Stewart the mother of our nation? "George," she says, "I need to redesign the world... I can transform the horror of the panty headdress into dust ruffles. I can transform the hooded prison garb into the perfect black dress." This demented George and Martha up the ante on their other

namesakes, from Edward Albee's infamous play, *Who's Afraid of Virginia Woolf?* While Albee portrays the domestic sphere as endless war, Finley goes one step further — Finley's George will destroy the world, while Martha would like to redecorate.

The genius of Finley's spoof is that her characters come to seem just slightly less pathetic than their real-world counterparts — objects to laugh and cringe at, but not to consume. George, snorting coke and cracking up; Martha, dominating, then giving in — this is surely as American as bombs over Baghdad. George and Martha share interior mindscapes warped as much by pop psychology as by power. While George snorts lines of the best cocaine, Martha tells herself, "His problem will go away if I can keep the focus on me... What we have both sacrificed is intimacy, our privacy. We both became our parent's ideal. But we are insecure and hide our unloved selves from the public at all costs." This absence of parental love overhangs the narrative — it's what drives George to drugs, mass murder, and gratuitous stupidity; Martha to mothering, smothering, and sensible megalomania.

We know Freud is in the house when Martha declares, "You're a stupid little Bush. You were named after a vagina." And this is only a warm-up. "Iraq is the mother that you control and destroy," she continues. "You greedily devour her milk, her oil, and you kill all of her children. You occupy and invade your mother. Your preoccupation with Iraq is maternal stalking madness." If this analysis seems cheesy and overwrought, take a look at whom Martha has chosen as paramour, a

drug-emboldened Georgie Porgie, screaming at his father over the phone, "Don't compare your war with my war!"

In such a satire, we can't help wanting it to go further, for bin Laden to actually exit Bush's ass and enter the story line, for Martha to upholster the air. But Finley sticks to the creativity inherent in her characters, which consists of nostril tantrums and baby wipes fantasies. If Martha is the hero in this sad tale only because her billion dollars doesn't keep her out of jail, her headless drawings of the head of state in various forms of sexual humiliation/ecstasy serve as counterpoints to her relative powerlessness. When George tells her she doesn't even need to visit the slammer — she does have a special relationship with the president, after all — she chooses prison because "it looks like what I feel like inside." The self-aggrandizing sob story might make you wince, but that is the point.

The scariest thing about *George and Martha* is that the truth can only be worse. Take the following example from "Open Letter to George Bush's Mama," included in *Dear President Bush*, a new collection of letters, essays, and speeches by antiwar activist Cindy Sheehan. Sheehan quotes from an appearance by Barbara Bush on *Good Morning America* in which she declares, "Why should we hear about body bags and deaths? Oh, I mean, it's not relevant. So why should I waste my beautiful mind on something like that?" Here Sheehan fires back, responding, "[My son] Casey came home in a flag-draped coffin on April 10, 2004. I used to have a beautiful mind too... Casey's beautiful mind was ended by an insurgent's bullet to his brain, but your son might as well have pulled the trigger."

In Sheehan's quest for accountability, she draws attention to the way the US war machine furiously creates enemies in order to further its imperialist agenda. "If terrorism dries up," she writes, "the military-industrial complex will drum up new enemies — be it bird flu, or the rising wave of democratic social movements in Latin America." Sheehan is, of course, one of those "enemies"; she describes a visit to Arlington National Cemetery, where she and other relatives of soldiers killed in Iraq and Afghanistan are prevented from bringing along photos of their dead relatives because these are considered "political statements." Then Sheehan blasts "antiwar" Democrats for doing little more than their Republican hawk counterparts to end the killing in Iraq.

But Sheehan's analysis is limited by deification-in-process. As the editor's note to *Dear President Bush* declares, "above and beyond all else, Cindy is a Mother. Not just a Mother, but Mom Laureate, Subcomandante Momus, Nobel Peace Mom, Dr. Mom Jr., Mahatma Momdi..." And Sheehan did undoubtedly galvanize thousands of people to antiwar activism when she confronted Bush near his ranch in Crawford, Texas, with the unanswered refrain: "What noble cause did my son Casey die for?" Nevertheless, it is unfair to compare Sheehan to the spokesperson for a decades-long underground revolution

(Subcomandante Marcos), the martyred symbol of the US civil rights movement (Martin Luther King Jr.), or the god of nonviolent resistance (Mahatma Gandhi).

Sheehan repeatedly states that she is not speaking for every mother, but she simultaneously falls prey to bouts of self-aggrandizement. In a recollection of watching Mel Gibson's *The Passion of the Christ* a few days before Casey left for Iraq, she says, "Of course, since I became a mom over 26 years ago, I have identified with Mary as she sobbed at the foot of her son's cross and cradled his lifeless body in her arms."

More dangerously, Sheehan espouses simplistic mothers-as-nurturers rhetoric: "I believe it is our motherhood — not just our feminism, but our motherhood — that makes us such strong warriors for peace." She dissects patriotism as an ideology of terror, yet invokes "matriotism" as a foil to militarism. Such a simplistic reversal (i.e., if mothers controlled the world, everything would be different) reeks of an essentialism that weakens Sheehan's logic. This shortcoming is evident when Sheehan repeatedly praises the "bravery" of her son Casey for supporting his military buddies in Iraq — if this is matriotism, it looks suspiciously like patriotism.

Sheehan is most compelling when she returns to the specifics of her struggle, as when she reveals, "I wish I had refused to allow my son to go to Iraq. I wish I had knocked him out and taken him to Canada... or anywhere far enough away from the war monster. It's too late for me and my son, but it's not too late for you." **SFBG**

Mattilda, a.k.a. Matt Bernstein Sycamore, is the editor, most recently, of That's Revolting! Queer Strategies for Resisting Assimilation. For more information, go to www.mattbernsteinsycamore.com.

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STACEY'S EVENTS

Thursday, May 4th @ 12:30
Catherine Allgor
A Perfect Union

There is little debate about the impact First Ladies such as Eleanor Roosevelt, Jacqueline Kennedy, and Hillary Clinton had on the Presidencies of their husbands. Long before gaining the right to vote, women were working behind the scenes to influence politics—and no one was more adept than Dolley Payne Todd Madison. *A Perfect Union* is both an illuminating portrait of the marriage of James and Dolley Madison, and a vivid account of a little-explored time in our history.

Friday, May 5th @ 12:30
Devyani Saltzman
Shooting Water: A Memoir of Second Chances, Family, and Filmmaking

Devyani Saltzman, the daughter of acclaimed filmmaker Deepa Mehta, makes her authorial debut with a memoir about how she navigated a life between two religions and cultures, and rekindled her relationship with her mother through the making of the film *Water*.



Thursday, May 11th @ 12:30
COSPONOSORED BY ASIA SOCIETY
Robert Buder and Gregory T. Huang
Guanxi

Stacey's and the Asia Society are pleased to welcome Robert Buder and Gregory T. Huang. *Guanxi* is the untold story of how Microsoft and China are teaming up to steer the future of computing. Buder and Huang take readers behind the scene of Microsoft's global operations, and offer a compelling lesson on how to compete globally in the twenty-first century.

Monday, May 15th @ 12:30
MYSTERY CIRCLE
Thomas Holland
One Drop of Blood

U.S. Army Central Identification Lab director Thomas Holland applies his forensic knowledge to a riveting work of crime fiction, *One Drop of Blood*. In this first book in a new series featuring forensic anthropologist Robert Dean "Kel" McKelvey, cutting-edge science and small-town secrets clash as investigations are reopened on two seemingly unrelated cold cases forty years ago.

Wednesday, May 3rd @ 12:30
David Maraniss
Clemente

Author David Maraniss offers tribute to one of the great baseball heroes of all-time, Roberto Clemente. Maraniss traces Clemente's impoverished childhood in Puerto Rico, victories during the 1960 and 1970 World Series, humanitarian contributions, and his legacy for Latino major league players.



Thursday, May 18th @ 12:30
Paul Rieckhoff
Chasing Ghosts: A Soldier's Fight for America from Baghdad to Washington

Paul Rieckhoff is a veteran of the war in Iraq. In *Chasing Ghosts*, he offers a provocative critique of the conflict, offering an infantry soldier's view of the war and the challenges confronting the American military in the field due to poor planning, lack of accountability and preparedness, inadequate protection, and other problems. Please join us for what promises to be a provocative program.



Thursday, May 18th @ 5:30 pm
STACEY'S COMMUNITY FORUM
Indy Press Thursday with the Independent Press Association

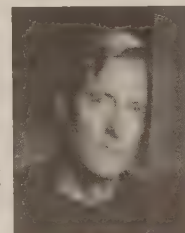
Come join us for a conversation on "Citizen Journalism and the Rise of Blogging" with guest speaker Suzanne Stefanac, author of *Dispatches from Blogistan*. This early-evening mixer will be an opportunity for publishing and media professionals and people curious about the media to network and discuss blogging and how it affects the indie press. This event is free, with light refreshments. Please RSVP by calling (415) 445-0230 x100 or email members@indypress.org. For more information go to www.indypress.org.

Monday, May 22nd @ 12:30
Ann Fessler
The Girls Who Went Away

The Girls Who Went Away is a critique of the consequences of policies enforced after World War II prior to Roe v. Wade. Ann Fessler, an adoptee, describes how countless single women were compelled to give up their children and how their situations were devastatingly compromised by the growing sexual revolution, limited birth control options, unrealistic social standards, and the unavailability of safe abortions.

Tuesday, May 30th @ 12:30
MYSTERY CIRCLE
Lee Child
The Hard Way

Jack Reacher has been described by the *Chicago Sun-Times* as, "the perfect hero . . . loved by women, feared by men and respected by all." Lee Child's newest thriller, *The Hard Way*, opens in a sidewalk café in New York City. Quietly sipping coffee, Reacher is in the right place at the right time—to stop a ransom quest gone wrong and to help a haunted man with a military past similar to his own.



Wednesday, May 31st @ 12:30
MYSTERY CIRCLE
Cornelia Read
A Field of Darkness

Local author Cornelia Read's debut mystery has already received starred reviews from *Booklist*, *Kirkus Reviews*, and *Library Journal*. In *A Field of Darkness*, Maddie Dare, married outside of her blue-blood class to a genius investor who takes frequent business trips, endures long weeks alone in her industrial-city home and becomes involved in an investigation to clear her favorite cousin from a double murder charge. Join us for an opportunity to talk with this up and coming author.

Thursday, June 1st @ 12:30
MYSTERY PANEL
Lisa Unger and Denise Hamilton
Beautiful Lies and Prisoner of Memory

The weather is beautiful, and Stacey's wants to be sure you have some great reads for your summer vacation. We're delighted to continue our Mystery Circle Fest with a panel featuring Lisa Unger and Denise Hamilton. In Unger's debut mystery, an impulsive good deed transforms the mundane life of Ridley Jones, a young New York City writer. Veteran Hamilton brings back reporter Eve Diamond to solve a mystery set in Los Angeles' vibrant Russian immigrant community.



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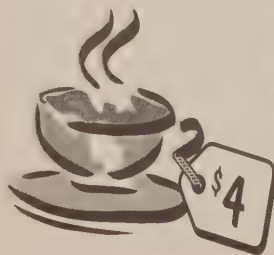
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The revolution will be anthologized

A collection of writings from glossy mag
BlackBook offers "dispatches from the
new counterculture"

By Brigid Gaffikin
> lit@sfbg.com

REVIEW Naomi Klein and Douglas Coupland are wondering if North America has, quite simply, lost the plot. Canada is on "an embarrassing, ugly slide," Coupland (a Canadian) observes in "Douglas Coupland vs. Naomi Klein," a conversation with his fellow writer (and Canadian) included in the forthcoming anthology *The Revolution Will Be Accessorized*. Klein, while focusing her critique on the United States, agrees. We're awash in consumerism, she says, asphyxiated by advertising in high-gloss magazines that's "overproduced, over-the-top, [and] decadent."

What's more, progressive politics isn't helping much. Progressives in the United States, Klein says, often try to "wake up" the population by hurling alarming facts at them and making them feel guilty about their cars and hamburgers. Unfortunately, she continues, "my experience is that guilt doesn't last long as a motivator. We need a way of talking about change that questions not just why we are comfortable when so many people aren't but also whether we are as comfortable as we think we are."

If that doesn't work, the pair concludes, we'll each end up enmeshed in our own nasty little fundamentalisms, adrift from the desire or ability to push for any sort of radical cultural change.

This uplifting exchange takes place amid a diverse collection of essays, stories, and interviews — frequently personal, sometimes nostalgic — concerning contemporary culture and politics. Oddly enough, most of them were actually published within the past few years in a high-gloss magazine of the very type decried by Klein: the New York City-based culture and fashion monthly *BlackBook*.

Despite *BlackBook's* trumpeting itself as a force of fashion as much as a purveyor of cultural commentary, nothing here stays at surface level. Rather, the deeply personal tone of many pieces provides much of the collection's strength. *Revolution* retains the busy feel of the magazine

with 26 diverse, often short pieces packed into some 200 pages, but the slightly manic design quality of the monthly is lost. Minus the hyperstylized visual presentation, and the many shiny ads, much here seems raw and intimate.

While the conversation between Klein and Coupland strikes perhaps the hardest note in the book, their frustration with the dopey and disinterested is mirrored elsewhere. "The Big Sell," Mike Albo's take on whether or not we're all doomed by new intersections of branding, marketing, celebrity, and psychology, alternates between bemused observation and despair over how advertising messes with our heads.

Glenn O'Brien's cheerful, slightly rambling essay about fashion and nostalgia is another outward-looking piece. Fashion, he says in "If It Makes You Think, Is It Fashion?," is just another opiate of the masses (or leisure classes; he's not absolutely sure which): "An organized form of narcissism, fashion distracts the population from economics, ecology, and 'current events.'"

Most of the stories, however, are more overtly personal, and their rough-edged imprecision is refreshing. Writing about his boyhood shoe fetish in "Sneakers Make the Boy," Jonathan Ames could be telling a private story to a friend — not us; we're eavesdropping. And in "In Praise of Zoos," Alain de Botton's tale of visiting a zoo and seeing the rituals of the animal world echoed in his own daily life, it's like he's leaning in close at the end of a drunken party, dispensing a series of profundities that actually make sense and merit afterthought. That autobiographical turn, or at least confessional style, also turns up in Augusten Burroughs's and M.J. Hyland's family-holiday stories, "Santa Shrink" and "The Last Christmas."

Some of the humor pieces feel a little forced — perhaps they'd read better in the context of a more-or-less throwaway magazine. "Demon Club Soda," Toby Young's clever, tragicomic story of being a nonalcoholic, and "If Death Is Just a

Doorway ... Why Shouldn't It Have a Door Policy?," Chuck Palahniuk's mock advertorial about a new kind of final resting place, feel somehow too tight and polished amid the intimacy of the other pieces. On the other hand, "My Mother Was a Monster," Ryan Boudinot's droll entry on cannibalism and bad cooking in 1970s suburbia, is just plain funny, as is "Wrapping with Christo," in which Dana Vachon goes all-out Ali G. on Christo and Jeanne Claude.

And while comic writing takes many forms in *Revolution*, there is blessedly little snarkiness here. If JT LeRoy's recent *BlackBook* editorial is to be believed, this signals the end of an era: Gen X's sarcasm has become boring.

Meghan Daum seems to agree, arguing in "LA Bourgeois" that even those who spent their teens or early 20s badmouthing the suburbs and conformity — dismissing as bougie things like books that become best-sellers, bands everyone knows, and once-rare sneakers that show up in malls — eventually begin to live that life, if only a little. "The more connected we become, the more we know about stuff. And the more stuff is known about, the more bourgeois it becomes," Daum writes in a frank and lyrical essay about how L.A. creates an obsession with appearing laid-back and glamorous that endangers true democracy.

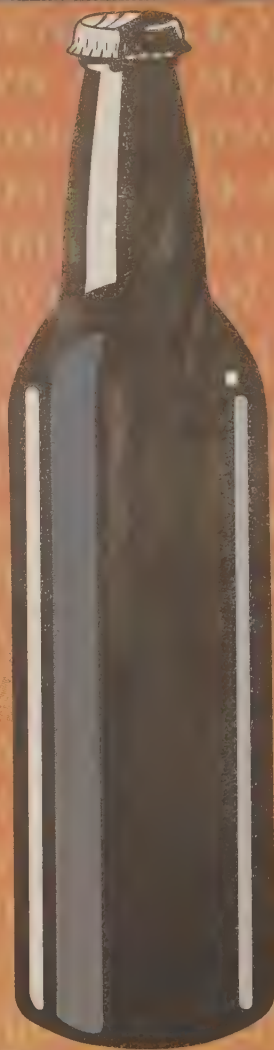
Her essay captures the real question for this collection: Can these angry, funny, reflective, and personal stories, coming from an outpost of such hardcore consumerism, be taken seriously? Coupland and Klein only half-jokingly suggest that *Revolution* runs the risk of participating in no more than an illusion of dissent — a concern that finds an echo in Daum's observations of illusory bohemianism in L.A., where consumption and non-conformity come together in the yoga aisle at Target.

And they're right about the risk. Still, this collection isn't shy about its origins, and on balance it offers more thoughtful reflections on the personal and political in contemporary culture than mere escapades into the world of the fashionable. **SFBG**

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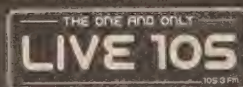
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BEER GUIDE

Classic beers are made from 4 ingredients: water, malted barley, hops and yeast. Water is the canvas upon which the brewer creates a beer.

Malted barley is produced by soaking the barley seed, then drying out the barley sprout in a kiln. Pale malted barley is the same golden color as the original grain. Pale malted barley (or barley malt, or malt) contributes color and light flavors to beer. Kilning, or roasting the barley, meat to a higher temperature creates roasted barley malt. Brewers use the wide range of roasted barley malt, from pale to amber to black to add richer flavor, color and aroma to beer. Some brewers use substitutes such as rice, corn or sugar for much of the malted barley in order to make lighter flavored, cheaper beer.

Hops are a flavoring component of beer. Anywhere from .02 to 2 percent of the raw ingredients are hops. Hops are a dried flower that contributes two key flavor components to beer, bitterness and aroma.

Yeast are one celled organisms that ferment the liquid ingredients to produce beer. Brewers employ two species of yeast: ale yeast for ale beer and lager yeast for lager beer. Ale beer is either ale beer or lager beer. The full range of pale to dark, bitter to sweet, and weak to strong can be found in each of these two beer families. Ale beers have more styles than lager beers because it was the original beer family. Lager beers were developed starting in the 1800's.

Other ingredients may be used in special beers: honey, wheat, rye, smoked barley, malt, fruit and spices. Beer styles originated in many and various places around the globe. Here are some examples of beer styles: Ale Beer, Mild Ale, Pale Ale, Bitter, Special Bitter, Extra Special Bitter (ESB), India Pale Ale (IPA), Scottish Ale, Belgian Double, Belgian Triple, Belgian Ales, Wheat Beer, Porter, Stout, Barley Wine Ale, Russian Imperial Stout, Lager Beer, American Light Lager, Helles, Dormunder, Pils, Maizen, Beck and Doppelbock. ©A Pal 2006

IT'S ALL FOR THE KIDS

The Telegraph Hill Cooperative Nursery School was founded in 1954 and is housed within the Telegraph Hill Community Center, in the heart of North Beach. Ours is a "cooperative school" which means that it is run entirely by member parents who also work as teaching assistants for our two licensed teachers.

We believe a child centered, nurturing atmosphere where children learn through play in a positive environment will provide a happy first school experience for our children, and will help them to develop to the best of their abilities. The school also educates parents in child development and positive and respectful techniques for working with children. As such, through our combined efforts, we become an extended community to our families and our neighborhood.

We accept children of all nationalities and backgrounds between the ages of 2 1/2 and 5 years old. The program is 2 days a week, Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday and Thursday, from 9:00 am to 12:00 pm. The program is primarily self-directed but with attention toward kindergarten preparation. The overriding goal is to touch on children's creative and intellectual

input, we are a "state of mind" that are family, and the most important thing is to have fun. We are a family, and the most important thing is to have fun. We are a family, and the most important thing is to have fun. We are a family, and the most important thing is to have fun.

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O'Reilly's Irish Pub & Restaurant
O beverages

Perry's Restaurant
Piazza Pellegrini
Pizza Organismica & Brewing Company
Schroeder's Restaurant
The Front Room Pizza
Trader Joe's
Washington Square Bar & Grill

A Taste of San Francisco Appetizer Bar

Bagels from Noah's Bagels
Pork Buns from Café Delight
Chili from Perry's
Oysters from O'Reilly's
Foccacia Bread from Danilo Bakery
Assorted Appetizers from Café Divine
Pate from Marcel et Henri
Sardines from King Oscar Sardines
Meatballs from Schroeder's
Gourmet Chex Mix from Hi Dive Café
Dolmas and Hummus from La Mediteranee
Mini-Steaks from Izzy's Steak and Chop House

Chicken Caesar Salad from Café Francisco
Hummus or Pita Bread from Green's Restaurant
Five-Spice Pork Ribs from Washington Square Bar & Grill
Polenta Fries and Dipping Sauce from Luella
Salami from Mastrelli's, Molinari and Palermo Delicatessens
Chicken Wings and Noodles from New Golden Daisy
Vegetarian Quiche, Greek Pie and Flautas from Caffè Sapore
Assorted Dim Sum and Sesame Buns from Four Seas Restaurant
Assorted sausage tasting from Aidell's Sausage Co.
Barbecued Chicken Wings from China House
Korean Appetizers from Seoul Garden Barbeque
Appetizers from Plumpjack Café and Balboa Café

Assorted Breads from Acme Bread Co, Arizmendi, Metropolis and Semifreddi's Bakeries
Assorted Pizzas from Pizza Organismica, The Front Room, Amici East Coast Pizza, California Pizza Kitchen and Cinecittà

Antipasti, Salad and Pasta Table

Caesar Salad from Café Francisco
Antipasti from Plumpjack Cafe
Vegetarian and Meat Lasagnas from Capp's Corner
Assortment of Pastas from: Bocce Café, Caesars, Piazza Pellegrini
North Beach Restaurant, Ristorante Parma, Pat's Café and Trattoria Contadina

Mexican Fiesta Table

Burritos from Rico's and Los Jarritos
Chips and Salsa from Chevy's, The Fruit Guys,
Left at Albuquerque, Los Jarritos, and Rico's
Assorted Taquitos, Chimichangas and Tamales

Sweet Treats Desserts Table

Italian Cookies from Il Fornaio
Sweet Treats From The Fruit Guys

Popcorn, Pretzels, Burgers and Dogs

Mini Sausages, Cheddar Munchies and Corn dogs from Bayside Sports Bar & Grill
Mini Burgers from Palkers Gourmet Burgers
Corn Dogs, Hot Pretzels and Fresh Pop Corn

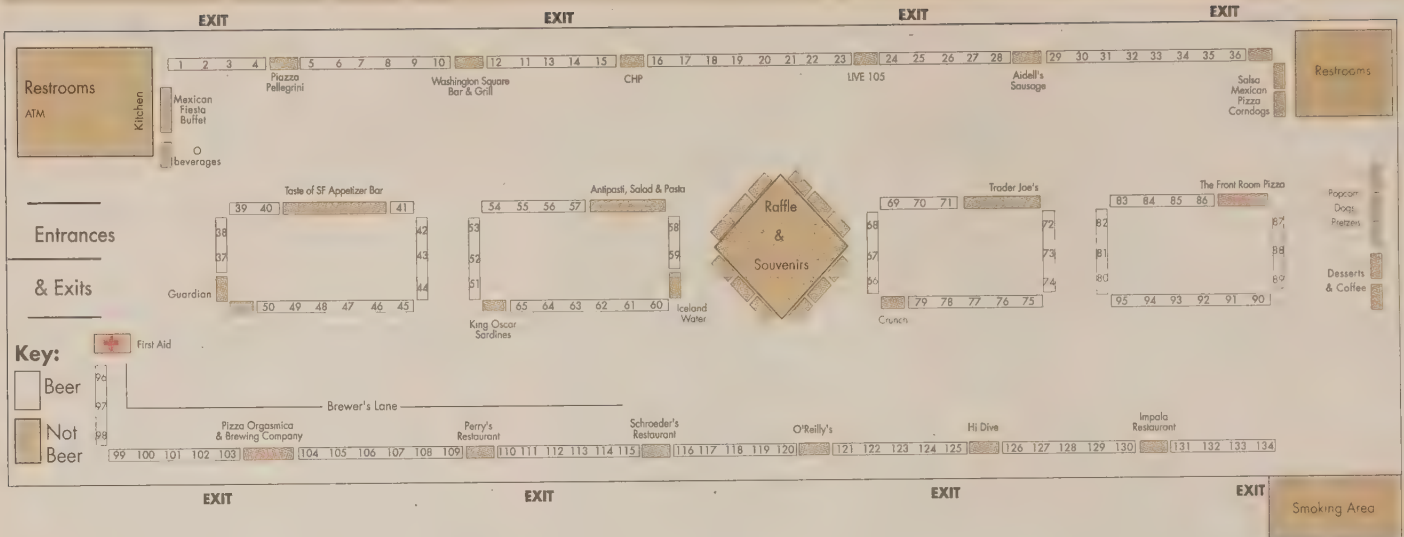
Beverages That Aren't Beer

Water and Sodas from O beverages and Trader Joe's,
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When you visit these restaurants and businesses please let them know that you tasted it here!
Note: some contributions may not be listed; others may change. Not all will be available throughout the event.

THE MAP



Brewery / Brand	Origin	Table	Brewery / Brand	Origin	Table	Brewery / Brand	Origin	Table	Brewery / Brand	Origin	Table
Unibroue	Canada	1	Hansa	Norway	36	Paulaner	Germany	67	Eldos Grill & Brewery*	San Francisco	101
Shipyard Brewing	Maine	2	Full Sail	Oregon	37	Izze Sparkling Drinks	USA	68	Anchor Brewing Company	San Francisco	102
Bear Republic Brewing Co	Healdsburg	3	Farmhouse Brewing Co	Gilroy	38	Portland Brewing	Oregon	69	Magnolia Pub & Brewery*	San Francisco	103
Brasserie de Tahiti Brewery	Tahiti	4	Coastal Range Brewery	Gilroy	39	Ace Cider	Sebastopol	70	Thirsty Bear*	San Francisco	104
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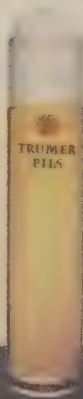


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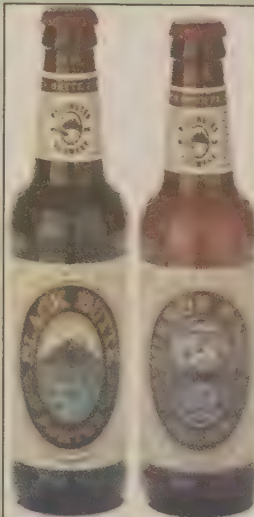
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On the road

An “accidental memoir” uses the specifics of geography to travel outside the genre

By Adam Klein
> lit@sfbg.com

REVIEW What Jean Genet did for the criminal queer, Kate Braverman has done for the stateless woman. Her recent *Frantic Transmissions to and from Los Angeles* is a hallucinatory document, equal parts poem, monologue, essay, and memoir, grappling with the complexity of identity, history, memory, and geography. And like Genet, she elevates the outsider, the subversive, using a protean point of view and carnivalesque language.

In her acclaimed novels, including *Lithium for Medea*, and her magnificent story collection, *Squandering the Blue*, Braverman used Los Angeles as a starting point for understanding the insulation and desperation of the risky women she often writes about. In this, her “accidental memoir,” LA represents our particular period of decline, a tawdry empire built tenuously on the desert, a place of contradictory origins, where barrios brush up against the Hollywood dream factory. In the book’s most lucid and bawdy passages, Braverman conjures the Jewish peasantry who stepped off boats and into this strange, hot zone, and the impatient, angry, dangerous children of those early LA settlers. The book resonates with a sense of apocalypse and disappointment.

While *Frantic Transmissions* lacks a cohesive narrative, there is a narrative arc and, as the title suggests, movement back and forth. The narrator’s prickly relationship with LA creates ample foreshadowing for her eventual relocation to the Allegheny Mountains, where her professor husband has secured a position and she embarks on her own domestic experiment. Mrs. X, as she calls herself, imagines forging a real relationship with the land, but this college town is so frozen over and remote that she comes to crave, of all things, LA malls — places she identifies as possessing “subtle seasons.”

Mrs. X is simply too much a product of LA to adjust to country life. The quotidian becomes a subject for analysis, a discipline she attends to with unnatural rigor. She describes vacuum-sealing apples as “a family adventure” and “feverishly” undertakes gardening, moving a dozen burlap sacks of bulbs to her “standard flowerbeds, experimental and control areas.” By the book’s conclusion, though, one understands and even gloats over the family’s hasty retreat from this attempted assimilation. LA

may be alienated, but small-town America is a morgue.

The book ends almost where it begins, with a discourse on absences. Most memoirs don’t culminate in the erasure of the book’s subject, but *Frantic Transmissions* suggests that a birthplace like LA, where “distance, travel and impermanence were givens,” requires an entirely different sense of embodiment, an ability to vanish and reappear as instinct or necessity demands. Braverman believes it’s possible to achieve such freedom, to escape the tightening consumer matrix, to haunt borders. And the renunciation of chronology and other narrative devices exemplify this memoir’s primary aim: to be an artifact of life lived unconventionally. The book asserts that living as a wild child or a mystic is still possible, even preferred, and Braverman rolls out a vision of uncompromised, holy villains, the marginalized marked for salvation. In this sense, her writing is ultimately romantic, and one encounters, as in Genet, the questionable correlation between petty criminals and cultural outlaws.

There are also moments when Braverman’s ideas are simply too telegraphed, too invested in the ’60s and other nostalgic possibilities for nonconformity. Women who’ve subverted the pedestrian, “patriarchal” norms are described in almost clichéd terms: “They consume two or three packages of cigarettes a day . . . They inhale Temple Ball opium from antique glass and cloisonné pipes once used by concubines.” It’s a bit of Orientalist bewitchery — smoking, no matter what the substance, doesn’t inherently mean liberation.

Overall, *Frantic Transmissions* cannot — should not — be read without a careful questioning of what it means to be free of custom, prevailing attitudes, and roadmaps to contentment. If rebellion is just another Hollywood myth, or a fantasy perpetuated by writers, petty thieves, stowaways, addicts, and badly behaved women, it is still powerful iconography. And with Braverman’s deft, innovative language, one can still dream of subversion, even if it’s a coffeehouse pose. **SFBG**

FRANTIC TRANSMISSIONS TO AND FROM LOS ANGELES

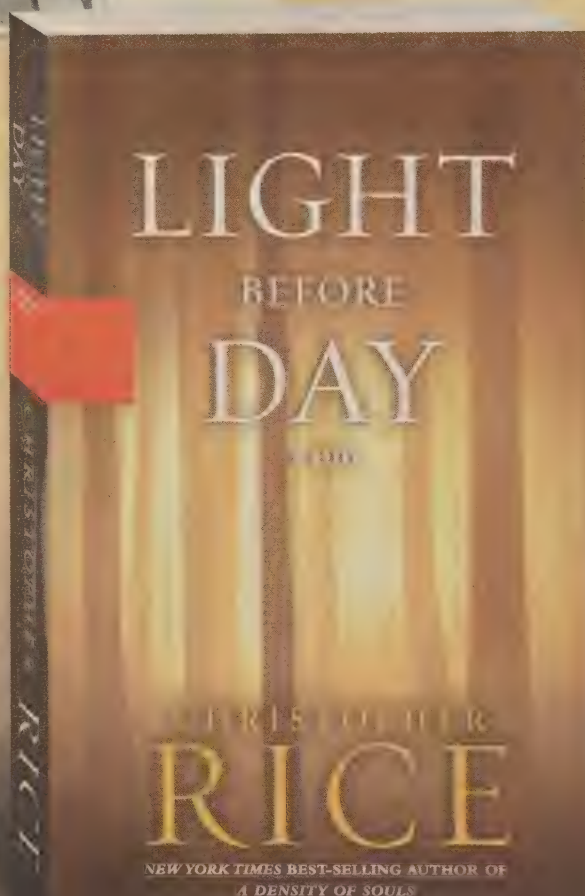
By Kate Braverman
Graywolf Press
180 pages
\$15 (paper)

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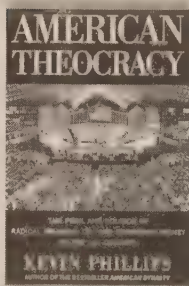
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AMERICAN THEOCRACY: THE PERIL AND POLITICS OF RADICAL RELIGION, OIL, AND BORROWED MONEY IN THE 21ST CENTURY

By Kevin Phillips
Viking
462 pages
\$26.95

Hell hath no fury like that of a political apostate, and surely there is no Republican apostate more coldly furious at the moment than Kevin Phillips, whose new book, *American Theocracy: The Peril and Politics of Radical Religion, Oil, and Borrowed Money in the 21st Century*, marshals an astonishing range of historical, religious, economic, and political data to argue convincingly that the United States is about to join its imperial predecessors —

Rome, Spain, the Netherlands, and Britain — in slamming into the brick wall of hubris. The alarming signs are everywhere, Phillips says, from the desperate attempt to retain oil hegemony by invading Iraq; to the seizure by theocrats of the Republican party; to the evolution, or devolution, of an economy in which the production of valuable goods has given way to a funny-money regime of finance and — most ominously — debt.

"There are disturbing trends: huge imbalances, disequilibria, risks — call them what you will," says Phillips's fellow disgusted Republican, and one-time Fed chair, Paul Volcker in a comment Phillips has culled from a 2005 story in the *Washington Post*. "Altogether the circumstances seem to be as dangerous and intractable as any I can remember. . . . It is more likely than not that it will be financial crises rather than policy foresight that will force the change."

For those of us who have long felt a terrible sense of foreboding about the price we will have to pay in the end for the Bush gang's military, fiscal, and moral recklessnesses, Phillips offers the cold comfort of historical precedent. Like the 16th-century Spanish, drunk on gold bullion shipped in from the New World, we have permitted our manufacturing base to erode; like the

wind-powered Dutch and the coal-fired British, we have hitched our wagon to a source of energy, petroleum, whose time is passing. A new energy regime is likely to arise, but we are unlikely to command it.

"History repeats only in outline, so the United States must find its own pathway," Phillips writes. "But the general parallel [with the declines of those previous hegemonies] is the basis for worry." And, maybe, just a pinch of fury at opportunities lost, prudent steps not taken while the clock ticked away. (Paul Reidinger)

A SCARECROW'S BIBLE

By Martin Hyatt
Suspect Thoughts
208 pages
\$16.95

"October is the time of year when you most feel yourself being pushed over the edge. This is home." So begins Martin Hyatt's first novel, in which he uses the tricks of second-person narration to tell the story of Gary, a Vietnam veteran plagued by flashbacks, a dead-end marriage, and an addiction to mixing liquor and pills in order to not quite face the world. The eerie flatness of the narration perfectly suits Gary's hazy vision, which paradoxically serves to expose the artifice of everything else, particularly the third-person interior

narration of Gary's love interest, Zachary, a boy 20 years his junior but already a fellow scarecrow in equally desperate circumstances.

A Scarecrow's Bible is most effective where it reveals the horror of the mundane. Gary unapologetically compares the guilt he feels at leaving work early one day to "the memory of shooting an Asian man somewhere between the eyes." When a friend of Gary's, also a Vietnam veteran, leaps to his death from the roof of a Wal-Mart, Gary's wife is shocked that this suicide upsets him more than the departure of their daughter for the foggy French Quarter of New Orleans. When love for Zachary pulls Gary deeper into drugs but then out into an unfamiliar sobriety, he dares to hope that his flashbacks of Vietnam will someday stop but never that resolution could involve anything beyond erasure.

While a scarecrow's bible must certainly contain gaps in vision and perception, Gary's Vietnam flashbacks rarely resonate beyond cliché, and his wife and daughter end up feeling like props for the soap opera ending. If the marvel of Hyatt's second-person narration lies in its seductive implosion, he often breaks the spell by explicating interior wanderings just when they begin to flood the senses. The ending, which takes on big themes of love and

loss, Vietnam and small-town homophobia, is certainly not easy on the heart or the conscience, but in relying on the gimmicks of conventional plot structure, it becomes overwrought instead of illuminating. (Mattilda, a.k.a. Matt Bernstein Sycamore)

AMERICAN MOVIE CRITICS: FROM THE SILENTS UNTIL NOW

Edited by Phillip Lopate
Library of America
825 pages
\$40

The release of the anthology *American Movie Critics* may have some armchair intellectuals wondering if the Library of America hasn't gone hip, but anyone who sits with this volume will be hard-pressed to deny that, over the course of a century, film criticism has developed into one of America's liveliest branches of letters. Editor Phillip Lopate has proved himself as a guide before (especially in *The Art of the Personal Essay*), and the purposeful curatorial narration and pithy author biographies on display here again show him to be an especially precious specimen of a dwindling breed: the American public intellectual.

From its roots as a vaudeville-inspired medium of attractions, the cinema has been nothing if not varied. Standing at the crossroads of complex aesthetic, economic, technological, and

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Author Events

YANNICK MURPHY | TUESDAY, MAY 2, 7 PM



Splitting time between a garbage-strewn apartment and an overly affectionate hot dog vendor, the observant 13-year-old who stands steadily at the center of *Here They Come* gives lyrical voice to a time and place — 1970's New York. Published by McSweeney's, Yannick Murphy's new novel creates a world as magical and harrowing as the struggle to come to grips with maturity.

LAURA ESQUIVEL | FRIDAY, MAY 12, 7 PM



Laura Esquivel's new novel, *Malinche*, is a richly imagined retelling of the tragic love affair between the conquistador, Hernán Cortés, and his Indian interpreter, Malinalli. Bursting with lyricism and vivid imagery, *Malinche* tells the story of a woman trapped between the Mexican civilization and the invading Spaniards, and unveils new truths behind a legendary love affair.

GARY SHTEYNGART | TUESDAY, MAY 16, 7 PM



Absurdistan, the new novel from Gary Shteyngart (author of *The Russian Debutante's Handbook*) stars "Snack Daddy," the overweight son of the 1,238th richest man in Russia, who must fight for his life, love, and country in various increasingly ridiculous situations. It includes — as any quality novel ought to include — harlots, gangster rap, push-up bras, a painful chapter on circumcision, civil war, Puma tracksuits, racism, and a lot of vodka.

PETER LAVEZZOLI | SATURDAY, MAY 6, 7 PM



The Dawn of Indian Music in the West, by author and musician Peter Lavezzoli, chronicles the remarkable 50-year history of Indian music in the West. Pioneered by Ravi Shankar and others, Indian music influenced everyone from George Harrison and the Beatles to John Coltrane, Philip Glass, and Mickey Hart of the Grateful Dead. For this event, the author will be joined by members of Ravi Shankar's band and other special guests.

SUSAN STEINBERG | MONDAY, MAY 15, 7 PM



The dozen, moody stories of San Francisco author Susan Steinberg's second collection, *Hydroplane*, buzz with tangible erotic tension. Sometimes laced with loneliness, sometimes seething with real and imagined menace, their breathless voices are propelled by a kind of monomania. Their words take on kinetic force, as though while reading, one were picking up speed, veering out of control.

CRAIG THOMPSON | TUESDAY, MAY 23, 7 PM



Craig Thompson's book-length picture novella *Good-bye, Chunky Rice* (now reissued in a handsome new edition), is the story of a turtle named Chunky Rice who leaves his home and mouse best friend to begin a new life. There are few graphic novels — or works of textual fiction — that so perfectly capture an emotion as Thompson's deeply affecting debut.

HELEN REDDY | TUESDAY, MAY 9, 7 PM



Here is the inspiring life story of the woman whose song "I Am Woman" became an international hit and the anthem of 1970s feminism. In *The Woman I Am*, acclaimed singer/songwriter Helen Reddy gives readers an intimate account of her musical career and often tumultuous personal life, while exploring the emotional highs and lows that shaped her life as an artist and deepened her spiritual faith.

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sociological considerations, movies have been worked over from innumerable approaches. Taking the essays in this anthology as a whole, American movie critics have largely shown themselves to be up to the task of tracking the medium's diversity and developments. Beyond the wide array of writing styles and critical voices, it's striking to realize how many different base attitudes toward film (from James Agee's caution to Pauline Kael's passion; from Siegfried Kracauer's suspicion to Jonathan Rosenbaum's seriousness) have worked as platforms over the course of this hundred-year metanarrative.

And make no mistake, there is a narrative here. Lopate structures the book to trace the evolving nature of the film-criticism genre. As he puts it in his introduction, "This anthology attempts to uncover the narrative trajectory by which the field groped its way from the province of hobbyists and amateurs to become a legitimate profession." The idea of this profession has always rested on the idea that film critics somehow "re-view" movies for their readers. With *American Movie Critics*, Lopate shows that the work of our best critics deserves the same courtesy. (Max Goldberg)

WEIRD CALIFORNIA

By Greg Bishop, Joe Oesterle, and Mike Marinacci
Sterling
272 pages
\$19.95

Call me biased, but it seems, uh, weird that the *Weird* series chronicled states like Illinois, Pennsylvania, and Ohio before dropping anchor in California, the state with perhaps the greatest per capita weirdness in the country. (OK,

Weird Wisconsin, I get — *Wisconsin Death Trip*, anyone?) Anyway, the Cali book is here, and it's a handsome thing: nearly 300 colorful pages dedicated to the obvious (Bigfoot) and the obscure (the Mission District's own "World's Largest Rubber Band Ball"). People, places, phenomena, and the just plain unexplained all get their due, with chapters divided by subject matter (flip to "Golden State Ghosts" for the 411 on Sunnyvale's haunted Toys "R" Us — yes!) rather than by location.

Be warned: This ain't Fodor's. While some of the entries give directions,

addresses, or Web sites, the bulky *Weird California* is better suited for coffee-table flipping than for vehicular navigation (although if you happen to be planning a journey in pursuit of the bizarre, it would make an excellent jumping-off point). In addition to longer pieces written by the book's three contributors, most chapters include chatty, first-person sidebars; in regards to a supposed SoCal burg of little people, complete with miniature houses and maybe even a wee McDonald's, Bambi from San Diego explains, "Munchkinland is true. My girlfriend and I found it by

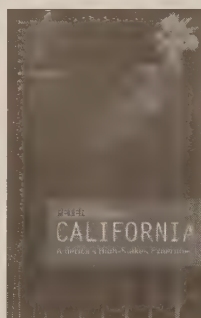
accident one night driving around La Jolla back in 1973." While some entries depict the indisputably real (like the Tail o' the Pup hotdog stand, which decorates the book's cover), its more obscure subjects (cursed mountains, "gravity roads," etc.) are often researched via this type of folkloric tale-telling. Skeptics may scoff, but it's all sweet meat for the freakishly curious.

Though I love giant roadside dinosaurs as much as the next rubber-necker, my favorite parts of this book concentrate on the real people behind some of California's odder moments.

The sections on alien contactees George Adamski and George Van Tassel (creator of "the Integratron," discussed here at length) are fascinating in a where-can-I-learn-more-about-these-dudes way; an entire chapter, "Local Heroes and Villains," features such all-stars as Emperor Norton I, Anton LaVey, Charles Manson, Patty Hearst, the Heaven's Gate fun bunch, and (my new favorites) UFO gurus Ernest and Ruth "Uriel" Norman. Welcome space brothers, indeed! (Cheryl Eddy)

CONTINUES ON PAGE 10 »

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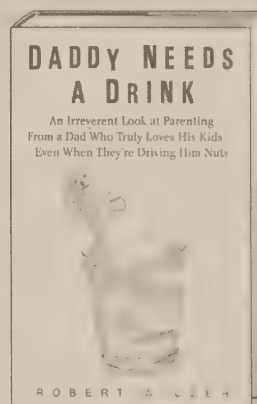
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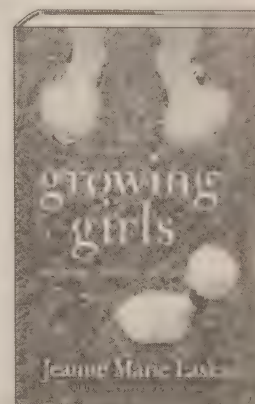
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CONT.

GOD'S SILENCE

By Franz Wright
Knopf
144 pages
\$24

God's Silence: The words float on a pale blue sky, defined at the bottom by a line of drying towels, one advertising AMERICA in reverse, strung between apartment buildings. It's an image stylistically correct for inspirational-lit covers, and the author's credits confirm this angle,

listing inclusions in *Best American Spiritual Writing* collections for 2004 and 2005. As that (figuratively) down-to-earth clothesline suggests, Franz Wright expresses the spiritual via verbal craftsmanship and affection for the secular. But a sense of shifting loyalties pervades the book: "The long silences need to be loved, perhaps / more than the words / which arrive / to describe them / in time."

What mars many of these poems is just that tendency to describe rather than to evoke, although Wright can use surrealism and irony to good effect. Mystical experience by its nature requires evocation rather than description, especially to prevent it from sounding plattitudinous. Wright's language, purposely colloquial to convey the holiness of the mundane, is often vague. Furthermore, by referring to God as "Him," or addressing Him as "You," what are basically personal prayers effectively exclude all but those with similar spiritual practices.

Wright does incorporate Buddhist, Muslim, and other traditions, however — as well as allusions to René Char and a translation of Rilke. And his insights are largely relevant to all humans, whatever their beliefs. "The Hawk," which imagines that raptor's "gold / skull filled with nothing / but God's will," also advises, "fellow monsters while we are

still here, for one minute, think / ... there is someone right now who is looking / to you, not Him, for whatever / love still exists." Then there's the confessional honesty of "Why Is the Winter Light?": "The meek / shall inherit Auschwitz, too / if they're not careful. Where do such obscurities / of thought originate?" Sensitive readers, however averse to blatantly spiritual poetry, are likely to find quite a few proverbial rough gems among Wright's flawed but fervent work. (Alexandra Yurkovsky)

HELL IN A HANDBASKET: DISPATCHES FROM THE COUNTRY FORMERLY KNOWN AS AMERICA

By Tom Tomorrow
Jeremy P. Tarcher/Penguin
\$14.95 paper
141 pages

Like the *Onion* and *The Daily Show*, political cartoonist Tom Tomorrow's parodies are often more informative than the mainstream journalism frequently represented in his *This Modern World* strips as "Action McNews." In fact, you could say he's doing the latter's job: exposing the hypocrisy, the inconsistencies, the lies, the dirt, and the sheer ridiculousness of modern American politics. His newest compilation of biting cartoon social commentary, the first to be printed in full color, carries on that fine tradition.

Tomorrow, otherwise known as Dan Perkins, is the undisputed champion of distilling the essentials — the most significant, and outrageous, aspects of current affairs — into four- or six-panel cartoons. Most of the strips aren't exactly laugh-out-loud funny — illustrating as they do a sorry state of affairs — but they're funny nonetheless, even when the humor stems simply from a rephrasing of an issue that makes it possible to examine it with new eyes. ("May the deity you so primitively worship be perceived as treating your nation-state with favoritism!" one character proclaims.) Reality never ceases to supply Perkins with the weird and wondrous escapades of politicians.

Among Perkins's favorite topics are the inability of Republicans to acknowledge reality ("The President did not mislead Americans about the imminent threat posed by Iraq — because he never specifically used the word 'imminent'!") and the even more frustrating inability of Democrats to do anything about it, or stand up to the current administration in meaningful ways. One strip ends with the preserved brains of Tom Daschle and Hillary Clinton considering issuing a possible statement supporting the restoration of democracy — in 2143. Oh, this modern world... Here's to a brighter Tomorrow. (David Moisi)

readings

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LESLIE FEINBERG

Tues/2, 7 p.m.
Modern Times Bookstore
888 Valencia, SF
(415) 282-9246
www.moderntimesbookstore.com

Leslie Feinberg broke new gender-bending ground back in 1993 with the semiautobiographical novel *Stone Butch Blues*. Now Feinberg returns with a follow-up, *Drag King Dreams*, set in post-Sept. 11 New York City and concerning an East Village drag club bouncer's reawakening to political activism.

MICHELLE TEA

May 4, 7 p.m.
City Lights Bookstore
261 Columbus, SF
(415) 362-8193
www.citylights.com

Local writer Michelle Tea reads from her first novel, *Rose of No Man's Land* (reviewed last month in *Lit*). Something of a coming-of-age tale, *Rose* documents the misadventures and discoveries of one fairly fucked-up teenage girl living in low-rent suburban hell.

PETER ORNER

May 8, 7 p.m.
A Clean Well-Lighted Place for Books
601 Van Ness, SF
(415) 441-6670
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Local author Peter Orner (*Esther Stories*) reads from his first novel, *The Second Coming of Mavala Shikongo*, a story set at a boarding school in Namibia and inspired by Orner's own teaching experience there.

ARIEL GORE

May 16, 6 p.m.
Cody's Books
2 Stockton, SF
(415) 773-0444
www.codybooks.com

Perhaps best known for bringing parenting zine *Hip Mama* into the world, Ariel Gore reads from her first novel, *The Traveling Death and Resurrection Show*, about a theatrical troupe of misfits whose talents include fire-breathing, levitation, and bleeding from stigmata on cue. Gore is accompanied by musical and puppeteering friends.

CRAIG THOMPSON

May 23, 7 p.m.
Booksmith
1644 Haight, SF
(415) 863-8688
www.booksmith.com

Graphic novelist Craig Thompson (*Blankets*) reads from and signs a new edition of his first full-length work, *Good-bye, Chunky Rice*, a heart-twisting tale of friendship and loss whose main characters happen to be a turtle and a dormouse. **SFBG**

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An interview and book signing with
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Leslie Feinberg *Drag King Dreams*

Tuesday, May 2 7:00

Stone Butch Blues author Leslie Feinberg's long-awaited novel about love and struggle in New York City's East Village.

James Dalessandro 1906

Wednesday, May 3 7:30

Modern Times commemorates the 100 year anniversary of the 1906 earthquake with a reading of Dalessandro's riveting historical novel. Event includes a special film screening

Andrew Ross *Fast Boat to China*

Thursday, May 4 7:30

Focusing on China, Andrew Ross's firsthand reporting and economic analysis offer a strong counterpoint to advocates of outsourcing.

Antonia Juhasz *The Bush Agenda*

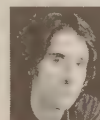
Wednesday, May 10 7:00

Antonia Juhasz exposes the Bush Administration's use of corporate globalization policy as a weapon of war in the Middle East and across the world.

Also on the calendar...the Ecstatic Monkey Reading Series, our Spanish language book club, poetry, fiction and nonfiction events.

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Kapow!er to the kapeople

HOUSE HUNTER

By Michelle Tea · sfsunday@aol.com

Spread out before me on a humble kitchen table, before a plate of homemade cake, is a pile of equally humble, homemade, and delectable booklets. The size of a very tiny zine or chapbook, these miniature delights — some with tactile sheets of wallpaper samples for covers, many trailing strings from their stitched bindings, each featuring poetry or prose accompanied by comic-style illustrations — are the offerings of Kapow!, an indie press operating out of the pop culture-cluttered bedroom of San Francisco resident Juliette Torrez.

A published poet, Torrez has, in various incarnations, been a backbone of poetry and spoken word scenes nationwide. From single-handedly orchestrating the (now defunct) Albuquerque Poetry Festival, which drew performance poets from across the country to the desert for a week of drunken verse-spewing in the '90s, to her work organizing the National Poetry Slam, Torrez has been a crucial behind-the-scenes force as well as a producer of her own soft-spoken, strong-cored poetry. And her latest offering to the world of DIY art, literature, and performance is Kapow!

"Mostly out of the slam scene" is where Torrez scores her writers, pulling comic-poets like Shappy, an NYC Bowery Poetry Club regular, and David Figler, a Las Vegas performance poet and a judge; the fatally sarcastic Tarin Towers; and the mystical and perverted Horehound Stillpoint off the stage and onto the page. "And a lot of folks worked at Last Gasp at some point," she adds.

A longtime employee of the SF-based lowbrow art publisher, Torrez became acquainted with the writings of Kapow! contributor (and local DJ) Chelsea Starr when she toiled there years ago. Starr's *Weird Bob* begins, "Weird Bob was a tall gangly speed freak who was always darting around the neighborhood on these weirdo bikes he made from bits and pieces he stole from other peoples' bikes." The story, heavy with renderings of a buck-toothed, swirly-eyed Bob as interpreted by cartoonist Johnny Ryan, is a peek at a less than functional childhood as lived by a no-nonsense, clear-headed little girl who knows that "it isn't one bit natural to have a fucked up carnie making pot brownies in your kitchen with his big hairy schlong hanging out."

Through her work with Last Gasp, Torrez also found access to

underground artists, many of whom she met while working the press's booth at comic and book industry conventions. "When I go to these shows and see what everyone has made — I just want to be a part of that world," she says.

Kapow! books have been coming out in a steady stream since Torrez started the project in 1999, though the stream has of late been reduced to a trickle, something she attributes in part to higher rent (less spare cash to pay artists) and in part to the "high flake factor" of her writers. She dazzles me with a story about a Kapow! poet who stole an autographed Mark Ryden art book from her home and then posted it for sale on eBay.

It sounds like a story lifted from the inside of one of her little books. Bucky Sinister's poetry minicollection *Tragedy and Bourbon* opens with the piece "South Boston, North Hell," wherein the bard recounts, "I was somewhere in Boston / Getting my ass kicked by Catholics again." "I took head shots from / The block's bully and went from / Blacked out to staring at the sun," commiserates Cas McGee in his poem "Wimp," part of the Keith Knight-illustrated collection *Bugs in Amber*. Porn scribe Cara Bruce's *Auto Erotic* is the jerk-off journal of a girl who gets off on flaming car crashes. "The fucking bastards were probably going to make it after all," she gripes about the libido-dampening affect of one careful driver. Skid row doughnut shops and police brutality get lyric treatment in activist James Tracy's *Donut Hole*; welder-poet-painter Noel Franklin longs for a wealthy relative to help support her art in the eloquent *Send More Yellow*. Torrez's own offering, *Cannibals of North America*, is a tour of an oil-rich Texan megalopolis; hurricane-whipped Mexican beaches; Spokane, Wash., barrooms; and familiar Mission District avenues where "the sun always shines / And the crack dealers hang out / At the end of my block."

With plans to put out five more books this year, Torrez is also in the process of compiling a Kapow! anthology. "Kapow! brings my two loves together," she says. "Comic books and poetry. Pen and ink people." **SFBG**

Kapow! books can be ordered through Last Gasp's distribution arm or purchased locally at bookshops such as City Lights Bookstore, Dog Eared Books, and Modern Times Bookstore, as well as at trade events like the Alternative Press Expo and Book Expo America.

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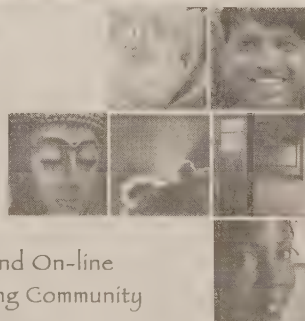
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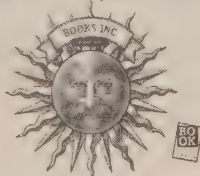
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Stage listings are compiled by Deborah Giattina. Performance times may change; call venues to confirm. Reviewers are Robert Avila, Rita Felciano, Karen McKevitt, and Lara Shalson. See Picks for information on how to submit items to the listings. For complete listings see sfbg.com.

THEATER

OPENING

No Exit Climate Theater, 285 Ninth St.; noexit2006@gmail.com. \$10. Runs Fri-Sat, 8pm (no show Fri/28). Through May 6. An all-female cast of recent Stanford University graduates takes a queer look at Sartre's scathing existentialist play. **A Number** Geary Theater, 415 Geary; 749-2228. \$10. Runs Fri-Sat, 8pm. Previews April 28-May 2, 8pm. Opening May 3, 8pm. Runs Tues-Sat, 8pm (except May 9, 7pm); Wed, Sat, Sun, 2pm (except no matinees April 30, May 3, and May 14). Through May 28. The American Conservatory Theater presents a West Coast premiere of Caryl Churchill's futuristic tale about family life in the age of genetic engineering, directed by Anna D. Shapiro of Strepwork Theater Company. **Winnie the Pooh** Young Performers Theatre, Fort Mason Center, Building C, Third Floor, 346-5550. www.ypt.org. \$6-9. Runs Sat-Sun, 1pm (also Sun, 3:30pm). Through May 21. The lovable bear and friends Christopher Robin, Piglet, Owl, and the rest have madcap adventures.

BAY AREA

TheatreWorks' 2006 Spring Festival of New Works Mountain View Center for the Performing Arts, 500 Castro, Second Stage, Mountain View; (650) 933-6000. www.theatreworks.org. \$10-15. April 26-May 7. See Web site for complete times. Highlights of this year's festival include a musical rendition of Jane Austin's *Emma* and playwright Adam Bock's latest, *The Drunken City*.

ONGOING

The 25th Annual Putnam County Spelling Bee Post Street Theater, 450 Post, second floor; 771-6900. www.ticketmaster.com. \$40-66. Tues-Sat, 8pm (also Sat, 2pm); Sun, 2 and 7pm. Open-ended. Here now, at last, as the Broadway hit musical parks its bleachers, superfluous basketball hoop, and gymnasium stage at the Post Street Theatre in a crowd-pleasing, brain-teasing West Coast premiere. Actually, brains aren't so much teased as tickled, more or less nonstop, by Rachel Sheinkin's Tony Award-winning book (after an original work conceived by Rebecca Feldman), William Finn's wonderfully inventive, ironical music and lyrics, and director James Lapine's outstanding, unflappable cast of adolescent and grown-up misfits, megalomaniacs, and weirdos. There can only be one winner amid all the juvenile jousting at the Putnam County spell-off, but rest assured that every runner-up—including the admirable audience participants selected at the start of the show—gets an exit to make an American Idol seethe with jealousy. (Avila)

The Dick in Dubya Show: A Republican Outreach Cabaret Marsh, 1062 Valencia; 1-800-938-3006. www.themash.org. \$5-22. Extended Run: Thurs-Sat, 8pm. Through April 29. Perhaps you're thinking the Republicans have been reaching out far too much as it is. What haven't they already grabbed? Nevertheless, the premise of Ed Holmes and Amos Glick's 70-minute cabaret is another kind of outreach, wherein Dick and Dubya sally into liberal enclaves, so-called blue country, to win over the hearts and minds and voting registration of some of the millions of people they've been screwing. Of course, it's an asinine idea that makes for an admirably funny show; but then that's hardly a surprise given the agitprop and improv chops of these Mime Troupe veterans. Holmes's cagey and uncanny VP has been a mainstay of Mime Troupe productions past, as has Glick's simple-in-chief, whom he masterfully reproduces in every gesture and inflection. Cleverly crafted, complete with a smattering of songs, a speech that writes itself (literally, being a string of real-life Bushisms), a hilarious video segment, and an impromptu town-hall style Q&A, only political satire this good could get us to laugh at the seriously unfunny catastrophes trailing behind (and ahead) of these donkeys. Or rather elephants. (Avila)

DIVA! 2006 Exit Theatre, 156 Eddy; 673-0947. www.exittheatre.org. \$12-20. \$35 (all-show pass). Through May 6. The annual festival features new plays by local women playwrights. See online schedule for times and dates of performances. The word *diva* probably conjures more images of Bette Midler or drag queens than a group of earnest local female artists, but then, what's art if it can't throw preconceptions into question? We caught only two of eight festival acts. Liebe Wetzel and Lunatique Fantastique presents their latest found-object puppetry show, *Beauty and the Beast*. This charming and heart-breaking piece follows a purple bra through her journey with breast cancer, where seemingly ordinary objects like gardening tools suddenly transform into doctors, and plucked rose

"Liz Lerman Dance Exchange"

PREVIEW Art and science, are they compatible or not? Is there a common ground? Increasingly the answer seems to be yes. Scientists often explain that a particular discovery was the result of having followed a "hunch," an "intuition"—a process artists understand. But does science also inspire art? More and more so. Nobody thinks twice about computer music. A few years ago Margaret Jenkins made a piece about plate tectonics, while last year Brenda Way looked at global warming. Now comes Liz Lerman with *Ferocious Beauty: Genome*, which translates information from the genetic code into dance theater terms. The piece was developed at Wesleyan University with input from faculty scientists, some of whom have tried their hands at choreography for this project. Lerman has long trod the uncommon path: She has made dances about the military and the defense budget; the connection between sports and the arts; and—in a contemporary version of the Underground Railroad—the ongoing search for shelter and safety. She has also "choreographed" the Lincoln Memorial for a cast of 800 and created a community project based on the 200-year-old port of Portsmouth, NH. Taking on something as huge as the human genome project might intimidate some choreographers. Not Lerman. (Rita Felciano)

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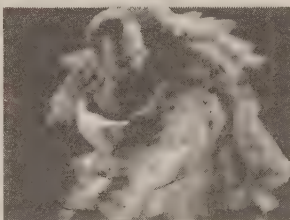
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petals represent hair lost to chemotherapy. LunFan excels at creating sympathetic characters—Imagine crying over a leopard-print bra. *Beauty* is also an artistic leap for the company—an object manipulators themselves have become characters instead of remaining "invisible" under black clothes and hoods. As LunFan experiments in this new terrain, its challenge will be not to lose its uniqueness—actors cannot elicit the same kind of audience response and emotions that objects can. Switching back to actor-centered theater, Sarah McKereghan's *Guns and Ammunition* may remind you of your last family reunion from hell. But this reunion takes place in a hospital waiting room, as the female relatives of a man who was shot in a robbery await news of his predicament. The stress prompts the women to figuratively litter the stage with dirty laundry and petty resentments. If you can relate to these women, witnessing their fights is akin to listening to fingernails on a chalkboard, which is probably a testament to McKereghan's writing and Carol Planagan's spot-on performance as the classic loudmouthed, overbearing mother-in-law, a diva in her own mind. (McKevitt)

Don Q Noh Space 2840 Mariposa; 621-7978. www.theatreworks.org. \$13-25. Thurs-Sat, 8pm (also Sun/23, 3pm and May 1, 8pm). Through May 13. Clown artist James Wilson plays the errant knight in this staging of Miguel de Cervantes's classic tale. **Fame Becomes Me** Curran Theatre, 445 Geary; 512-7770. www.shnsf.com. www.ticketmaster.com. \$30-90. Previews April 25 through May 7, 8pm. Opens May 9, 8pm. Tues-Sat, 8pm; Wed, Sat-Sun, 2pm. Through May 21. Martin Short performs in an autobiographical musical he conceived with *Hairspray* musical directors Marc Shaiman and Scott Wittman. **Farewell to the Tooth Fairy** Off Market Theatre, 965 Mission; 646-0776, (650) 355-4296. www.gold-starevents.com; \$20. Sun, 7pm. Through May 28. Comedian Lynn Ruth Miller performs her one-woman show.

Happiness Marsh, 1062 Valencia; 1-800-938-3006. www.themash.org. \$15-22. Sat, 8pm. Through April 29. Rick Reynolds (*Only the Truth Is Funny*) performs a workshop version of his new solo show. **Haze** Intersection for the Arts, 446 Valencia, SF; 626-3311. www.theintersection.org. \$9-20. Thurs-Sat, 8pm. Through April 29. Campo Santo presents a world premiere piece based on the writings of Junot Diaz, Dave Eggers, Denis Johnson, and Vendela Vida, and directed by Sean San José. **Hija** New Conservatory Theatre Center, 25 Van Ness; 861-8972. www.nctcsf.org. \$22-40. Wed-Sat, 8pm; Sun, 2pm. Through May 7. Andrew Nance directs Ash Kotak's play about a young Indian man who attempts to marry his boyfriend by having him pass as a woman.

The History of Stone Jon Sims Center for the Performing Arts, 1519 Mission, SF; 554-0402. www.jonsimcenter.org. \$10-20. Fri-Sat, 8pm; Sun, 2pm. Through April 30. In Bay Area playwright Ian Walker's well-crafted story of retribution and atonement in postapartheid South Africa, an American anthropologist (Sylvia Kratins) and a black South African coworker (Fred Pitts) camp at a shack near a series of ancient cave paintings one year after the



agile, 60-minute *History of Stone* (copresented by the Jon Sims Center for the Performing Arts and Three Wise Monkeys Theatre Company) is a fresh and insightful exploration of the making and unmaking of history in a contested land. Three Wise Monkeys artistic director Alice Shikina helms a capable cast in a modestly sized production that effectively grounds the play's stimulating themes in a captivating dramatic triangle. (Avila)

Island of Animals Thick House, 1695 18th St.; 401-8081. www.goldenthread.org. \$10-30. Preview Thurs/20-Fri/21, 8pm; Opening Sat/22, 8pm. Runs Thurs-Sat, 8pm; Sun, 5pm (no show on Sun/23). Through May 14 (also Park Cinema, 37411 Fremont, Fremont. Runs May 26-28). In this beautifully realized staging of a tenth-century Islamic fable, a set of castaways, men drawn from the various nations of the world, survives shipwreck on a lush and harmonious island only to decide its riches are their rightful due. Chafing under the yoke of human domination, the animals of the island bring their case for freedom and dignity before the just and wise King of the Jinn, who presides over *The Case of Animals* versus Man. Golden Thread Productions partners with the Afghan Coalition and Ballet Afaneh for an inspired theatrical adaptation of a story by Ikhwan al-Safa (the Brethren of Purity), a group of learned men drawn from Ismaili Muslim philosophers in Basra, Iraq. Animated by a spirited and litanesque ensemble cast (including members of Ballet Afaneh), and a breathtaking storybook design scheme by Kate Boyd (augmented by Mayu McCart's excellent costumes), director Hafiz Karmali's eye-catching production is a family-friendly menagerie with real philosophical meat on it. Its humor, compassion, and insight come forward in a winning mix of western and eastern theatrical styles, underscoring a universal theme—reverence for the sanctity of all life—whose enduring relevance could hardly be more palpable. (Avila)

Just Desserts! Shelton Theater, 533 Sutter; 751-9234. www.48thavenueproductions.com. \$15. Fri, 7:30 pm. Sat, 8pm, Sun, 2pm. Through April 30. Frank Gigliotti directs this comedy about office politics. **Mac and Mabel** Eureka Theatre, 215 Jackson; 978-9933. www.42ndstmoon.org. \$20-38. Wed-Fri, 8pm; Sat, 6pm; Sun, 3pm. Through May 7. 42nd Street Moon closes its season with Jerry Herman's musical about silent pictures. **Miss-matches** Shelton Theater, 533 Sutter; 820-1454. www.miss-matches.com. www.brown-

papertickets.com. \$20-25. Extended run: Fri-Sat, 10pm. Through April 29. (also Off-Market Theater, 965 Mission, #250. \$15-20. Thurs-Sat, 8pm. May 4-July 1, 8pm). Leslie Beam performs her new solo show about relationships formed through the Internet. **The Night** Dark Room Theatre, 2263 Mission, SF; 261-3077. www.darkroomsf.com. \$12-15. Fri-Sat, 8pm. Through April 29. Comedy, fantasy, and even spirituality are crucial elements of this whodunit with a twist.

Not a Genuine Black Man Marsh, 1062 Valencia; 826-5750. \$15-22. Extended run: Thurs-Fri, 8:30pm; Sat, 5pm. Through April 29. What, the unapologetically middle-class Brian Copeland asks, is the real meaning behind the phrase "a genuine black man"? By way of an answer, the stand-up comic and KGO radio host offers up a simultaneously funny and disarmingly frank story about growing up African American in the racist suburb that was San Leandro in the early 1970s. Letting his narrative bounce back and forth between

CONTINUES ON PAGE 64 »

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Percussion legend and classical *tabla* master Zakir Hussain and his Masters of Percussion return to Zellerbach Hall with a thrilling display of North Indian drumming, a mix of traditional and contemporary, folk and classical, melodic and rhythmic. The concert also showcases the dazzling and athletic dancing drummers of Manipur and acclaimed *sarangi* master Ustad Sultan Khan. The Masters of Percussion include Zakir Hussain (*tabla*), Fazal Qureshi (*tabla*, *kanjira*), Taufiq Qureshi (*percussion*), Bhavani Shankar (*Ipakhawar*, *dholak*), Khete Khan (*khartal*), Manipuri Jagoi Morup (*dancing drummers of Manipur*) and Niladri Kumar (*sitar*)

Order Online www.calperfs.berkeley.edu Charge by Phone 510.642.9988 Ticket Office Zellerbach Hall Mon-Fri 10 am - 5:30 pm Sat-Sun 1 pm - 5 pm

WELLS FARGO

a number

by Caryl Churchill DIRECTED BY Anna D. Shapiro

FEATURING Josh Charles and Bill Smitrovich



"Stunning! Don't be fooled into thinking that you'll be able to keep a clinical distance."

The New York Times

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THEATER

his boyhood memories and a period of depression that overtook him as a parent in 1999 — and interlacing the autobiography with verbatim utterances from both sides of the fight his family joined to desegregate the city — Copeland brings admirable chops as a comedian to bear on some difficult and disturbing, if ultimately hopeful, material. (Avila)

Shove Off-Market Theaters, 965 Mission, Stage 205; 896-6477, www.custommade.org \$10-20, Thurs-Sat, 8pm, Through May 13. Custom Made Theater Company presents New York playwright Mark Eisman's dark comedy about a former street urchin now newsworld attendant, Genette (a sharp and vibrant Cassie Powell), whose self-esteem and horizons expand exponentially when she serves as jury foreperson on a criminal trial and skillfully turns her peers 180 degrees around to acquit a man (Ross Pasquale) suspected of shooting a woman in front of a subway train. Now obsessed with befriending the exonerated paranoid recluse — against the better judgment of her fellow juror Selken (Todd Brotze), a desperately smitten security guard, and her cynical but motherly employer Cathy (A.J. Davenport) — Genette's pushing things along the track of inevitability (more than metaphor on Bruce Walters's set dominated by the flashing face of a train emerging from the grimy white tiles of a subway tunnel). Eisman's cartoony but witty and engaging story circles around the notion of peers — that through alternately supporting, ignoring, judging, and oppressing us — and while probably speaking its meaning more than necessary (especially during the drawn-out climax), proves a fun ride overall. A few timing issues aside, director Christopher Jenkins pilots this enjoyable Bay Area premiere with smooth assurance. (Avila)

BAY AREA

The Devil's Disciple Live Oak Theatre, 1301 Shattuck; (510) 649-5999, www.aefberkeley.org \$10-12, Fri-Sat, 8pm (also May 4), Through May 6. David Stein directs George Bernard Shaw's play about a US colonial rebel.

Faity Intelligence Marsh at Gaia Theatre, 2118 Berkeley, Berk; (800) 838-3006, www.theatremarsh.org \$15-22, Wed-Thurs, 7pm, Through April 27. Added show: Fri/28, 7pm, Remember that old picture of Woody Guthrie with the sign on his guitar reading "this machine kills fascists"? Cross that image with Tom Lehrer, a dash of John Denver, Doctor Demento, and maybe a Mormon missionary, and you get something approximating the sight and sound of Roy Zimmerman, the clean-cut take-no-prisoners political satirist (formerly of satirical folk group the Foremen and, more recently, creator of several solo albums) whose well-honed and up-to-date solo show has arrived at the Berkeley Marsh. Assailing the new fascism with expert fretboard fills, equally competent vocals, a highly articulate knack for wordplay and rhyme, and a half-angushed, half-devilish gleam, Zimmerman's songs negotiate everything from the war on terror to "Jerry Falwell's God" and the songwriter's own version of a transnational anthem, while broaching headline issues like abstinence-only sex-ed, same-sex marriage, and creator science. Zimmerman's cunning verbosity can be deflected by a recurring strain of corn (doubtless, GMO-free but still) and an ungovernable urge to pun, but (unlike, say, the Democrats) even in defeat he manages to register a particular genius. (Avila)

Money and Run Episode 4: Go Straight, No Chaser La Val's Subterranean, 1834 Euclid, Berk; (510) 464-4468, www.impacttheatre.com \$10-15, Thurs-Sat, 8pm, Through May 27. Impact Theatre takes on Wayne Ray's underground serial comedy about a crime duo.

Richard III Berkeley Art Center, 1275 Walnut, Berk; (510) 276-3871, www.jeremycrole.org \$12-17, Thurs-Sat, 8pm (except no show May 11), Through May 20. Jeremy Cole directs Shakespeare's classic tragedy.

Small Tragedy Aurora Theatre, 2081 Addison, Berk; (510) 843-4822, www.auroretheatre.org \$28-45, Wed-Sat, 8pm; Sun, 2pm, 7pm, Through May 14. Kent Nicholson directs the West Coast premiere of Craig Lucas's 2004 Obie-winning play.

The Sisters Rosenzweig Mountain View Center for the Performing Arts, 500 Castro, Mountain View; (650) 903-6000, www.theatreworks.org \$20-54, Wed-Sat, 8pm; Sun, 2pm, 7pm (also Sat, 2pm), Tues-7:30pm, Through April 30. TheatreWorks presents Wendy Wasserstein's play about sisterhood and romance as its final show for its season.

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DANCE

"24 Views" ODC Theater, 3153 17th St. w; twentyfourviews.org; (415) 439-2473, Sun, 7pm, Free. Choreographers in Action presents this annual showcase of "two-minute previews" by more than 24 local choreographers.

"Bay Area National Dance Week" Various Bay Area venues, www.bayareandw.org, Wed-Sun, Free. The eighth annual week of dance features more than 200 classes, performances, and exhibitions.

STAGE

"Choreographers in Mentorship Exchange (CHIME)" Margaret Jenkins Dance Lab, 301 Eighth St. #200, 826-8399, Sun, 2pm, Free. The latest event in this series features Ledoh and Sara Shelton Mann discussing their work in a mentorship relationship, focusing on Ledoh's choreography.

"Cuba Caribe Festival" Dance Mission Theatre, 3316 24th St. www.dancemission.com, www.cubacaribefest.org, Fri-Sat, 8pm; Sun, 2 and 7pm \$12-20. In the final weekend of the second annual festival, Alayo Dance Company performs the world premiere of *After Rain*.

Virginia Iglesias Red Poppy Art House, 2698 Folsom; 826-2402, www.redpoppyarthouse.org, Fri, 8 and 9pm, \$15. The dancer-choreographer presents a night of flamenco music and dance.

Liz Lerman Dance Exchange Yerba Buena Center for the Arts Theater, 700 Howard, SF; 978-ARTS, www.ybca.org, Fri-Sat, 8pm, \$15-30. The company explores "life in the bio-age" with the dance theater piece *Ferocious Beauty: Genome*.

"Rovaty 2006: Glass Head" Kanbar Hall, Jewish Community Center of San Francisco, 3200 California; 292-1233, Fri-Sat, 8pm, \$18-20. The Rova Saxophone Quartet, Butoh-inspired dance collective inKbAt, and multimedia artist Eric Kozol collaborate on this performance.

San Francisco Ballet War Memorial Opera House, 301 Van Ness; 865-2000, www.sfballet.org, Wed/26, 7:30pm; Fri/28, May 4, and 6, 8pm (also May 6, 2pm), 8pm; Sun/30, 2pm, \$8-99, Program 8 includes *Continuum* by Christopher Wheeldon, *Elemental Brubeck* by Lar Lubovitch, and *Reflections* by Yuri Possokhov.

BAY AREA

Ballet Folklórico "Quetzal" de Veracruz Zellerbach Hall, Bancroft at Telegraph, UC Berkeley, Berk; (510) 642-9988, www.calperfs.berkeley.edu, Sun, 3pm, \$22-40. The company, comprised of more than 45 dancers and 10 musicians, performs dances of Mexico.

"Berkeley Dance Project" Zellerbach Playhouse, near Bancroft at Dana, UC Berkeley, Berk; (510) 642-9925, <http://theaterberkeley.edu>, Fri-Sat, 8pm; Sun, 2pm, \$6-14. The UC Berkeley Department of Theater, Dance, and Performance Studies presents a premiere by artist-in-residence choreographer Reggie Wilson along with programs by Margaret Jenkins and Ellis Wood.

Dimensions Dance Company Malonga Casquelourd Center for the Arts, 1428 Elsie, Oakl; (510) 465-3363, www.ticketweb.com, Sat, 8pm; Sun, 3pm \$15-25. The company performs *Rooted in Ritual*, *Spiritual Retreat*, and excerpts from *Rhythm Harvest*.

Patricia Bullitt Oakland Public Library, Lakeview Branch, 550 El Embarcadero, Oakl; (510) 238-7344, Sat, 3pm, Free. The solo dancer performs *Migrating Woman* with Bird 2.

Paufve Dance Shawl-Anderson Dance Center 2704 Alcatraz, Berk; (510) 428-9713, www.paufvedance.org, Fri-Sun, 8pm, \$15. Randee Paufve choreographs seven site-specific pieces in a work entitled *The Big Squeeze*.

"World Dance Salon" Mahea Uchiyama Center for International Dance, 729 Heinz, Berk; (510) 845-2605, www.mahea.com, Sat, 8pm, Free. This performance includes dances from Hawaii, Tahiti, and North and South India.

PERFORMANCE

"2106" Project Artaud Theatre, 450 Florida, SF 665-2276, Fri, 7pm; Sat-Sun, 2pm, \$12-15. Local troupe Accroarts City Center presents a new show that imagines a city of the future.

"Anagnippe" Florence Gould Theater, Legion of Honor, 34th Ave at Clement; www.ticketweb.com, Sat, 2pm, \$29-32. Donald Pippin's Pocket Opera presents Handel's tale of ancient Rome.

"CultureCore Youth Arts Celebration" Brava Theater, 2781 24th St. www.culturecore.org, Sat, 2pm, Free. Six local cultural arts organizations present an afternoon of kid-friendly visual and performing arts at this tenth annual event.

Dark Room Theater 2263 Mission; 401-7987, www.darkroomsf.com, Wed, 8pm: Michael Capozzola's *I, Mascot*, \$5-10, Fri-Sat, 8pm: *Mystery Play The Night*, \$12-15, Sat, 10pm: Spoken word comedy with Modern Problems, \$10.

"Distaff Clowns and Giddy Gongs: An Evening of Short Plays by Short People" African American Art and Culture Center, 762 Fulton; 235-4358, Mon, 6:30pm, \$5-20. Professional actors perform staged readings of 12 plays written by fifth graders at John Swett Elementary School.

"A Diva's Swan Song" Brava Theater, 2789 Mission; 392-4400, www.cityboxoffice.com, Sat, 7:30pm \$25. Big band and cabaret singer Gail Wilson performs a farewell concert.

"Gander Pirates with Fresh Meat" El Rio, 3158 Mission; www.freshmeatproductions.org, Wed, 8pm, \$7-10. Fresh Meat 2006 and the Trans March benefit from this night of music and performance, featuring the Whoa Nellies, Shwava Virgo, the Mighty Slim Pickins, the Harlem Shake Burlesque, and more.

"George and Martha" Lecture Hall, San Francisco Art Institute, 800 Chestnut; 771-7020, www.sfa.edu.

Mon, 7:30pm, Free. Karen Finley performs a dramatized reading from her new satire, which imagines a romance between George W. Bush and Martha Stewart.

"In the Rough" Traveling Jewish Theater, 470 Florida; 626-0453, ext. 105, www.playwrightsfoundation.org, Sat, 10:30pm. The Playwrights Foundation hosts this developmental reading series. This week, *The Good Negro* by Tracy Scott Wilson.

"June Jordan's Poetry for the People Final Reading" Barrows Hall, Upper Room, Eighth Floor, UCB Berkeley Campus, intersection of Bancroft and Telegraph, Berk, Wed-Thurs, 7pm. A hundred students read their poetry, free.

"The New Patron Saints" Presentation Theatre, USF School of Education, Turk and Masonic, (415) 422-2186, Free, Thurs-Sat, 8pm; Sun, 2pm. Stephen Steelman, a major in Performing Arts and Social Justice, presents his senior project about sex and deception.

"Reverend Billy's Rapture Interruptus Revival" Victoria Theater, 2961 16th St. www.revilby.com, Sun, 8pm, \$10-12. Anticorporate crusader Reverend Billy performs with the Stop Shopping Gospel Choir. See Picks, page 26.

"The Romane Event" Make Out Room, 3225 22nd St. www.makeroom.com, Wed, 8pm, \$5. Comedian Paco Romane hosts this monthly variety show.

"Sins Invalid: An Unshamed Claim to Beauty in the Face of Invisibility" Brava Theater, 2789 24th St. www.thedancingtree.org, Fri, 8pm, \$10-20. The Dancing Tree presents a multimedia performance featuring local disabled artists.

BAY AREA

"Actors Reading Writers: Celebrating Writing through Live Readings" Berkeley City Club, 2315 Durant, Berk; (510) 845-9542, ext. 376, Mon, 7:30pm, Free. Local actors read from biographies of Marc Chagall, Isadora Duncan, and others.

Dia Dance Foundation benefit: La Pena Cultural Center, 3105 Shattuck, Berk; (510) 849-2568, www.lapena.org, Sun, 6pm, \$15. This evening features Afro-Cuban folk dance, plus live salsa and timba music with Rumbacha.

COMEDY

Cobb's Comedy Club 915 Columbus; www.cobbcomedyclub.com or www.ticketweb.com, Wed, 8pm, *Pro Comedy Showcase* \$10, Thurs-Sun, 8pm (also Fri-Sat, 10:15pm); Paul Mooney, \$15-20. Concourse Exhibition Center, intersection of Eighth and Brannan, SF; (415) 382-8300, Sat, 9pm: Swami Beyondananda and local comics, \$10.

Punch Line Comedy Club 444 Battery, SF; (415) 397-7573, Wed-Sat, 8pm (also Fri-Sat, 10pm) Jimmy Shubert, \$12-20, Mon, 8pm, "Get It? Gameshow," \$6, Tues, 8pm: Suk McCullough, \$12.

Wheeler Auditorium UC Berkeley Campus, near intersection of Bancroft and Telegraph, Berk; (510) 642-7477, Mon, 8:30pm: Gabriel Iglesias, \$14.

SPOKEN WORD

Open mics take place almost every night in cafés throughout the Bay Area. If you want to perform, show up about half an hour before start time to put your name on the list. A day-by-day guide to spoken word events and featured readers.

WEDNESDAY: Parkside Branch Library 1200 Taraval SF, (415) 355-5770, www.sfpd.org, Genny Lim reads, 7pm, free.

THURSDAY: City Hall 1, Dr. Carlton B. Goodlett Pl., SF: The Mayor and Board of Supervisors host an open mic in honor of National Poetry Month, 5:30, free.

Edinburgh Castle 950 Geary, SF; (415) 312-2973 Cowgirl Writer's Collective presents their first annual "Wig Party Reading Rodeo," 7pm, free. **Mechanics** Institute 57 Post, SF, www.milbrary.org, Robert Thomas, Zack Rogow, D.A. Powell, and Chana Bloch read, 6pm, free. **Unitarian Center** 1187 Franklin, SF, www.sfsu.edu, poetry. A reading by editors of 26: *A Journal of Poetry and Poetics*, 7:30pm, \$5.

FRIDAY: Youth Uprising 8711 MacArthur, Oakl; info@youthspeaks.org, "Lyrical Warfare," 4pm, free.

SATURDAY: North Berkeley Senior Center 1911 Hearst, Berk; (510) 981-5190, "Sixth Berkeley Poetry Festival," 6pm, free. **SUNDAY: Bird & Beckett** 2788 Diamond, SF; (415) 586-3733, Walker Brents discusses Sufi poets, 4:30pm, free. **Cafe Purple** 584 Pacific, SF; (415) 950-8837, Open mic featuring Garrett Murphy, 4pm, free. **City Lights Books** 2616 Geary, SF; (415) 362-8193, Will Alexander and George Albon read, 5pm, free. **Cody's Books** 2454 Telegraph, Berk; (510) 845-7852, "Poetry Flash," featuring Luis Garcia, David Gittin, and Belle Randall, 7:30pm, \$2.

MONDAY: Pryia Indian Cuisine 2072 San Pablo, Berk; berkeleypoetryexpress@bayarea.com, "Poetry Express," open mic featuring Alice Templeton, 7pm, free.

TUESDAY: City Lights Books 261 Columbus, SF; (415) 362-8193, Solid Ground Youth Poetry Anthology readings, 7pm, free. **World Ground Cafe** 3726 MacArthur, Oakl; (510) 482-2933, "Poetry Diversified," open mic with host Tres Santos, featuring President Davis, 7:30, free. **SPAC**



"United States Hot Rod Association Monster Jam"

PREVIEW Drop the hammer and gag it 'cause this weekend your favorite hot shoes are mashing their motors and slapping some wheelies on the roundy-round. Check out Monster Jam World Finals favorite Del Scorcho and his *compadre* Gravedigger revving their trannies as Maximum Destruction does a T-bone into Monster Mutt and Black Smith cyclones in the hookin' clay. The open-air fairgrounds are the perfect spot to watch these 9,000-plus-pound beasts compete in side-by-side and freestyle events, crushing everything from cars and buses to motor homes as they tear across 700 cubic yards of fresh dirt. So grab your Skoal and your beer cozy: Monster trucking is making a comeback — you could be one of the first to catch a footful of the action. (Caitlin Van Dusen)

USHRA MONSTER JAM Fri/28–Sat/29, 8 p.m.; Sun/30, 2 p.m.

(Pit party Sat/29, 5:30–6:30 p.m.) Chris Beck Arena, Sonoma County Fairgrounds
Santa Rosa. \$8–\$16. (707) 528-TIXS, www.ticketmaster.com

Events listings are compiled by Sarah Han. See Picks, page 26, for information on how to submit items to the listings.

WEDNESDAY 26

BENEFITS

"Gender Pirates with Fresh Meat" El Rio, 3158 Mission; www.freshmeatproductions.org. 8pm, \$7–10 sliding scale. See Picks, page 26.

THURSDAY 27

BENEFITS

"Flip Your Lid" Supperclub, 657 Harrison; 626-1248. 6:30pm–2am (depending on donation), \$30–37.5. Don your craziest hat and enjoy performances and dancing at Black Rock Arts Foundation's fundraising event.
"Funk Out with Rock" Broadway Studios, 435 Broadway; 333-4001. www.rocksf.org. Stytle and the Pimp Jones Luv Orchestra, Mission Players, and reallyJoel perform benefit Real Options for City Kids.

FRIDAY 28

AROUND TOWN

San Francisco New Living Expo Concourse Exhibition Center, Eighth and Brannan; 382-8300. 9–10pm, \$10–15. This holistic health fair features 300 exhibits, an intuitive arts arena, a bookstore, body work pavilion, a natural foods court, and more. Through Sun/30.

BAY AREA

United States Hot Rod Association Monster Jam Chris Beck Arena, Sonoma County Fairgrounds, Santa Rosa; (707) 528-TIXS. www.ticketmaster.com. 8pm, \$8–16. See pick box.
Whad' Ya Know? Zellerbach Hall, UC Berkeley Bancroft Way, Berk; (510) 642-9988. 8pm, \$22–42. Radio show host and quiz master Michael Feldman brings his program to UC Berkeley for a live taping.

SATURDAY 29

AROUND TOWN

"The New Garde" City Hall, 1 Dr. Carlton B. Goodlett Pl; 284-9400. 8pm, \$50. Gen Art presents this spring fashion show featuring designs by Dema, HMA Designs, Erica Tanov, Liza Sonia, Galya Rosenfeld, SUKifresh, and Gytha Mander. **San Francisco New Living Expo** Concourse Exhibition Center, Eighth and Brannan; 382-8300. 10am–9pm, \$10–15. See Fri/28.
"Wise Ass Wisdom Quirkshop" One Taste Urban Retreat Center, 1074 Folsom; www.wisesswisdom.org. 10:30am–6:30pm, \$30–60. This day-long transformative workshop is for people who seek spirituality and change in their lives without the New Agey experience.

BAY AREA

United States Hot Rod Association Monster Jam Chris Beck Arena, Sonoma County Fairgrounds, Santa Rosa; (707) 528-TIXS.

www.ticketmaster.com. Pit party, 5:30pm; show, 8pm, \$8–16. See pick box.

BENEFITS

ArtSeed Dance-a-thon Presidio Dance Theatre, 1158 Gorgas; www.ppsf-sf.org. 10am–midnight, \$5. Get pledges and dance to help raise money for ArtSeed; the event also includes educational dance instruction.

"Bachelorette, 34" fundraiser El Rio, 3158 Mission; 282-3325. 3–8pm, \$10–20. hey willpower!, Charming Hostess, and the Beth Custer Ensemble perform to help raise funds for Kara Herold's film *Bachelorette, 34*.
"Inspiration" Cellspace, 2050 Bryant; www.pmagevents.com. 8:30pm, \$20. Dress up in a wacky costume or outfit for this multimedia dance benefit featuring performances by Dancing Village Productions and the Northern California Dance Collective; DJs; astrologer Caroline Casey; founder of the Action Hero Network, Cory Richardson; raw food from Lydia's Lovin' Foods of Marin; and more. Proceeds benefit New Orleans' hurricane relief.

"Roadmate 2006" Speedway Meadow, Golden Gate Park, JFK Dr at 25th Ave; www.roadmate2006.org. Noon–4pm, free. This fundraiser hopes to bring bike riders and car drivers together to promote safety and learn about sharing the road; highlights include live bands, giveaways, a barbecue, and more. Proceeds benefit the Paul David Clark Safety Fund.

Trainspotting — 10 Years On Edinburgh Castle Pub, 950 Geary; 885-4074. 9pm, \$10–20 donation. The Edinburgh Castle presents its tribute to *Trainspotting* with clips from the movie and about Irvine Welsh, readings from the novel, live music by the Shakespeares, and more; proceeds benefit the world premiere of Irvine Welsh's new play *Babylon Heights*, opening at the Exit Theater in June.
"Walk Against Rape" Mission and Embarcadero Sts; 861-2024, ext 301, www.sfwar.org. 10am. Participate in a 5K walk to benefit San Francisco Women Against Rape.

Exhibition Center, Eighth and Brannan; 382-8300. 10am–7pm, \$10–15. See Fri/28.

BAY AREA

United States Hot Rod Association Monster Jam Chris Beck Arena, Sonoma County Fairgrounds, Santa Rosa; (707) 528-TIXS, www.ticketmaster.com. 2pm, \$8–16. See pick box.

BENEFITS

"Sugar Mama" Brava! For Women in the Arts Theater, 2481 24th St; 846-7621. 5pm, \$25. Gwen Avery, Linda Tillery, and Tammy Hall perform; proceeds benefit Avery to help her continue her musical career. **SFBG**

SUNDAY 30

AROUND TOWN

San Francisco New Living Expo Concourse

PAGAN FESTIVAL AND PARADE



Saturday, May 6, 2006, 10 am - 5 pm

Civic Center Park Berkeley CA
Martin Luther King, Jr. Way
(Between Center & Allston)
Downtown Berkeley BART stop
1 1/2 blocks west to Civic Center Park

Theme "Evolving Spirit"

Interfaith Ritual, Traditional Dance, Music, Crafts
Vendors, Authors Circle, Information Booths, Food
Altars, and Children's Area

Keeper of the Light: Anne Hill

Hosted by Shay Black
Awards for Best Float and Best Costume

Food Drive for Alameda County Community Food Bank
Used Cell Phone Donation for 'Secure The Cali'
In Touch Massage proceeds go to charity

Afterparty by Axis Mundi www.soundclick.com/axismundi

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March 4

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at the Empire Plush
Room, with:
Elana James
Box Set duo
Maude Maggart
and the
New Orleans
Klezmer All-Stars

March 11

at the
Freight & Salvage
in Berkeley, with:
Culture Club
and Other
amazing guests

March 18

at a location TBA,
with: Kate Clinton

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SEDDGE THOMSON'S
WEST COAST Live

food + drink

(1) Go Girl™ energy drink

(2) Kangaroo carpaccio, Apotek, Reykjavik

(3) Chickadee cupcakes with almond beaks

(4) Arugula salad and *Football Wives*

(5) Stale-ish Peeps



Shima sails into the limelight with huge, sushi-laden boats, traditional Japanese fast-food fare, and service for those on the go.

GUARDIAN PHOTO BY RORY McNAMARA

Deeper into sushi

By Paul Reidinger
paulr@sfbg.com

Opera Plaza doesn't look like restaurant heaven, and, for the most part, it isn't. The development's long-running success story is Max's Opera Café, a faux deli that deals in mountainous portions, with dill pickles and fries. Over the years there have been a few places with more style, among them Carlo Middione's Vivande and Bruce Cost's Monsoon, but in neither case was traction established, and neither concern lasted long.

The crash of Monsoon isn't all that difficult to understand in retrospect. Whereas Vivande at least had a big sign overlooking the busy corner of Franklin and Golden Gate Avenues to let potential patrons know it was there, Monsoon (which opened soon after the 1989 earthquake) was buried deep in the complex and wasn't all that easy to see even from the interior courtyard, complete with its Stalinist concrete and fountain. Here, too late, are my directions: Enter the courtyard from Van Ness, with A Clean Well-Lighted Place for Books on your right, pass the fountain, and shear to your right as you approach the movie theater. You will see a neon sign and,

beyond some glass doors, will find yourself at the host's station in a restaurant, and while the restaurant won't be Monsoon (which closed early in 1993), it will be pretty good. It is Shima Sushi and represents a return to respectability for a centrally located yet obscure site that had fallen into slightly tacky gloom.

A postulate I have been forming recently is that many troubled and oft-flipped restaurant spaces find a stable life serving sushi and other Japanese food, and Shima Sushi bolsters the argument. It helps, certainly, that uncooked fish has long been a form of fast food in Japan, for the large lunchtime crowds at Shima consist, one supposes — to judge by the office garb and accoutrements — largely of people who work in the neighborhood's complex of municipal, state, and federal offices, and they are visibly under some time pressure. Shima accommodates them gracefully, with bento boxes (\$7.95 for a choice of two items, \$8.95 for three) featuring such delicacies as tuna sashimi and crisp-skinned, smoky-sweet salmon teriyaki, along with miso soup, mixed green salad, and bean sprouts with scallions. (There is also a vegetarian bento box.) Other choices include a sushi lunch special

(\$8.95), with a California roll (real crab is \$1 extra and worth it) and a mix of sushi pieces likely to include tuna, hamachi, salmon, and shrimp. Those averse to raw flesh have recourse to various forms of teriyaki, tempura, donburi, and udon. Service is quite swift and polite, but the staff is too busy hurrying to do much hovering, and once you're served, they're likely to let you be unless you make some want or need known. Then they do come running.

By evening, the mood of the restaurant visibly softens: The light seems a bit yellower, the blond wood of the Japanese-style partitions a bit warmer, the bubbles in the aquarium a bit bigger and lazier. The patronage, too, mellows — but then, people do live in and around Opera Plaza, and for them, Shima is a jewel of a neighborhood restaurant, with a favorable quality-to-price ratio and enough room to accommodate walk-ins while keeping the noise level reasonable. The dinner menu resembles an expanded version of the lunch menu; the chief additions are a list of specialty rolls and a trio of "special combinations" — blow-out sushi festivals served in wooden boats. You order according to the size of your party; we were three and opted for the Shima spe-

cial (\$75, "serves three or more") but quailed when the ship approached the table looking like one of those freighters you sometimes see sailing through the Golden Gate, so laden with booty as to be nearly submerged.

"We'll never be able to eat all that," said one of my fellow musketeers and one justly renowned for doughtiness in the face of huge amounts of food. As things turned out, we did empty the ship of its cargo, which the other musketeer, to my right, perhaps a bit less doughty, described as "tuna-heavy." As indeed it was, not that there was anything wrong with that. We worked our way through nigiri and sashimi editions of maguro, toro, and albacore (underrated; always fabulously buttery), along with salmon, red snapper (thin sheets of pearly flesh splashed with rose), and bonito, whose ribbing gave each piece the look of a chunk of burst all-terrain tire on the shoulders of a mountain highway. Astern, the ship had been laden with rolls, among them Super California — strips of barbecued eel laid atop rice disks stuffed with avocado and snow crab — and Lion King, a California roll wrapped in salmon, then baked in foil like a potato.

In due course the denuded ship sailed away, guided by a smiling

server who nonetheless shook her head in polite awe at what we had accomplished. A few moments later she showed up with small bowls of green tea ice cream: reward or penalty? Neither; the ice cream was included in the deal, to be shipped under separate cover. The doughty musketeer made a face at the prospect of green tea ice cream but polished it off since, in the end, a sweet is a sweet is a sweet, especially if at no extra cost. **SFBG**

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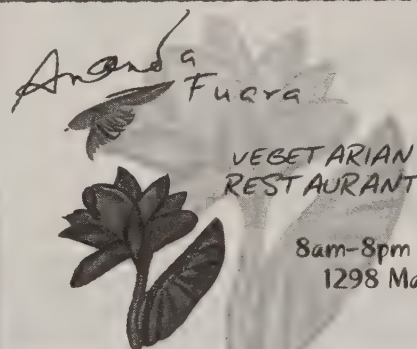
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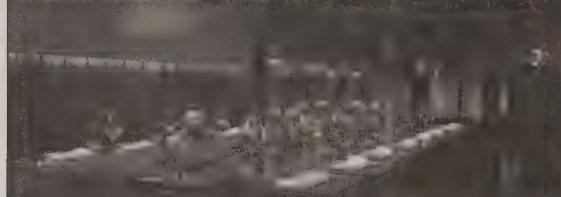


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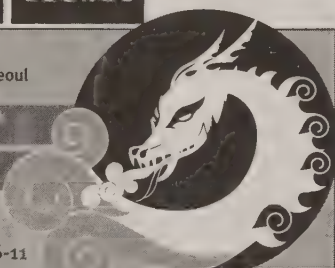
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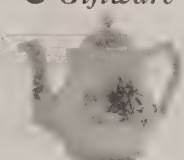
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Tossing the salad

During the long weeks of this un-spring, I have often found myself looking out into the rain-swept garden and thinking: salad. The reasons for this connection have to do, I suspect, with the fact that the garden looks like a huge salad — greens of various shades and shapes dripping with water, as if from those computer-controlled squirt guns in the produce section at the supermarket — and with the fact that by the end of winter, one is just sick to death of greens, of any and every kind. The winter dinner so often ends in a simple tossed salad because the diners simply cannot bear another round of beets or turnips or parsnips or broccoli or cauliflower.

But even salad can grow weary-some, and this is true even if the greens or baby greens are enlivened by the colorful presence of edible flowers. What can the beleaguered home chef do to bring a spark of life to the season's umpteenth tossed salad? You can cheat, of course, by slicing in some hydroponic tomatoes, or cucumber that comes in that Saran Wrap stuff, or some other imported memento of summer; you can add leftovers, like white beans or risotto. You can add bottled artichokes, you can change your vinaigrette, you can drop the vinaigrette entirely in favor of creamy dressing.

Or: You can add parmesan chips. There are many, many upsides here, from welcome crunchiness to a distinctive nutty-salty tang to the pleasure of actually making the chips. If there is a catch, this is it: Parmesan chips are DIY. You might be able to buy them prepackaged, but I've never seen them so offered, and anyway, making them is easy and fun.

Begin by finely grating a cup or so of parmesan cheese. Real Parmigiano-Reggiano is vastly preferred here, of course, but you could also use grana padano or romano or any other grateable cheese. (The pre-grated stuff in the green can? I cannot comment.) Preheat your oven to about 300 degrees Fahrenheit and grease a cookie sheet or line it with wax or parchment paper. Spoon the grated cheese onto the cookie sheet in well-spaced little mounds, as if making cookies. Bake for 5 to 10 minutes; when the cheese melts into disks and turns a pale gold at the edges, the pan is ready to come out of the oven. Let the disks cool slightly, remove them from the pan, add them to the salad and ... toss!

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FOOD + DRINK



Cav Wine Bar

REVIEW Maybe it's the flight of robust German reds talking, but Cav seems like the sleekest, yet somehow the most laid-back, entry in the recent rush of wine bar openings. (Is there, like, a wine bar mafia hiding out here lately?) While other new oenophile venues certainly have their particular charms, Cav's the only one that aims for hipness without turning class into sass.

Owners Pamela S. Busch and Tadd Cortell have fashioned a list with global reach (Portugal, Australia, the surprising Germany) that highlights the adventurously cozy and pairs it with a full menu of worldwide California fare — gnocchi with crayfish and sunchokes (\$7.50/\$15), lamb osso buco with creamy semolina polenta (\$10/\$20), both available as tapas or main courses. Along with the quiet, humming atmosphere, outgoing staff, and clean-lined, low-lit interior (like being on "a train ride for taste buds," as a friend described it), this makes Cav a perfect date place — strange wines to talk about and comfy food to share. Another bonus: Because Cav focuses on little-known foreign regionals, there's no pressure to look like an expert. Menu and flights change weekly. (Marke B.)

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Welcome to our dining listings, a detailed guide by neighborhood of some great places to grab a bite, hang out with friends, or impress the ones you love with thorough knowledge of this delectable city. Restaurants are reviewed by Paul Reidinger (PR) or staff. All area codes are 415, and all restaurants are wheelchair accessible, except where noted.

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DOWNTOWN/EMBARCADERO

Bar Crudo can be found perched above the Stockton Street tunnel and offers a panoply of Euro-Cal and Asian-influenced seafood dishes, many of them uncooked, in a loftlike setting of vertical intimacy and rustic-industrial chic. (PR. 3/06) 603 Bush, SF. 956-0396. Seafood, D, \$\$, AE/DS/MC/V.
Bushi-tei melds East and West, old and new, with sublime elegance. Chef Seiji Wakabayashi is fluent in many of the culinary dialects of East Asia as well as the lofty idiom of France, and the result is cooking that develops its own integrity. The setting — of glass, candles, and ancient lumber — shimmers with enchantment. (PR. 3/06) 1638 Post, SF. 440-4959. Fusion, D, \$\$\$, AE/MC/V.
Fleur de Lys gives its haute French cuisine a certain California whimsy in a setting that could be the world's most luxurious tent. There is a vegetarian tasting menu and an extensive, remarkably pricey wine list. (PR. 2/05) 777 Sutter, SF. 673-7779. French, D, \$\$\$, AE/DC/DISC/MC/V.

Danko is an exercise in symmetries, with food, ambience, and service in a fine balance. Danko's California cooking is distinctive, but the real closer is the cheese cart, laden with the exquisite and the rare. (Staff) 800 North Point, SF. 749-2060. California, D, \$\$\$, AE/DC/DISC/MC/V.

MoMo's San Francisco Grill The New American food at MoMo's is surprisingly excellent, and the interior

decoration is opulent, with prairie-style furniture, wood trim, dark-green carpeting, and dimpled leather upholstery on the banquettes. (Staff) 760 Second St., SF. 227-8660. American, BR/L/D, \$\$, AE/MC/V.

Puccini and Pinetti practically shouts festivity; a bright, primary-colors decor (with an emphasis on yellow and blue), plenty of noise, and solidly rendered Italian-American comfort food. (Staff) 129 Ellis, SF. 392-5500. Italian, L/D, \$, AE/MC/V.
Tu Lan has few luxuries except the food, which is a luxury to the wealthiest palate. Raw foods converge in salads and stir-fries that'll leave you wondering why your own cooking doesn't look as easy and taste as good. (Staff) 8 Sixth St., SF. 626-0927. Vietnamese, L/D, \$.

NORTH BEACH/CHINATOWN

Dalla Torre is one of the most inaccessible restaurants in the city. The multilevel dining room — a cross between an Italian country inn and a Frank Lloyd Wright house — offers memorable bay views, but the pricey food is erratic. (Staff) 1349 Montgomery, SF. 296-1111. Italian, D, \$\$\$, AE/DC/DISC/MC/V.

Gondola captures the varied flavors of Venice and the Veneto in charmingly low-key style. The main theme is the classic one of simplicity, while service strikes just the right balance between efficiency and warmth. (PR. 2/01) 35 Columbus, SF. 956-5528. Italian, L/D, \$, MC/V.

Michelangelo Cafe There's always a line outside this quintessential North Beach restaurant, but it's well worth the sidewalk time for Michelangelo's excellent Italian, served in a bustling, family-style atmosphere. The seafood dishes are recommended; approach the postprandial Gummy Bears at your own risk. (Staff) 597 Columbus, SF. 986-4058. Italian, D, \$\$.
Rose Pistola cooks it up in the style of Liguria, and that means lots of seafood, olive oil, and lemons — along with a wealth of first-rate flat breads (pizzas, focaccias, farinatas) baked in the wood-burning oven. (PR. 7/05) 532 Columbus, SF. 399-0499. Italian, L/D, \$, AE/DC/MC/V.

SOMA

Barcar means "wine goblet," and its wine menu is extensive — and affordable. Chef Arnold Wong's eclectic American-global food plays along nicely. (Staff) 448 Brannan, SF. 904-4100. American, D, \$, AE/MC/V.

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Big Nate's Barbecue is pretty stark inside — mostly linoleum arranged around a pair of massive brick ovens. But the hot sauce will make you sneeze. (Staff) 1665 Folsom, SF. 861-4242. Barbecue, L/D, \$, MC/V.

Fly Trap Restaurant captures a bit of that old-time San Francisco feel, from the intricate plaster ceiling to the straightforward menu: celery Victor, grilled salmon filet with beurre blanc. A good lunchtime spot. (Staff) 606 Folsom, SF. 243-0580. American, L/D, \$\$, AE/DC/MC/V.

Fringale still satisfies the urge to eat in true French bistro style, with Basque flourishes. The paella roll is a small masterpiece of food narrative; the frites are superior. (PR, 7/04) 570 Fourth St., SF. 543-0573. French/Basque, L/D, \$\$, AE/MC/V. **LJ's Martini Bar and Grill** sits on the second floor of the urban mall we know as Metreon, but its menu of American favorites and international alternatives is stylishly executed and reasonably priced in a sophisticated environment. For lunch, sit on the sunny terrace. (PR, 9/04) 101 Fourth St., SF. 369-6114. American, L/D, \$, AE/DC/MC/V.

Maya is like a good French restaurant serving elegant food that tastes Mexican. There are unforgettable flavors here: corn kernels steeped in vanilla, lovely grilled pork tenderloin served with a pipian sauce of pumpkinseed and tamarind. And for those weekday take-out lunches, there's **Maya (Next Door)**, a taqueria that operates to the left of the host's podium. (PR, 9/04) 303 Second St., SF. 543-6709. Mexican, L/D, \$\$\$, AE/DC/DISC/MC/V. **Tamal** offers inventive Mexican-influenced small plates, including a selection of namesake tamales, in a lonely corner of southwest SoMa. The food can be inconsistent, but the best dishes are wonderful. (PR, 4/05) 1599 Howard, SF. 864-2446. Nuevo Latino/tapas, D, \$\$, AE/DC/MC/V. **XYZ** joins the pantheon of fabulous restaurants in the city's hotels. Lusty California cooking glows like a campfire in a cool (if slightly deracinated) urban setting. (PR, 3/03) 181 Third St., SF. 817-7836. California, B/BR/L/D, \$\$\$, AE/DC/DS/MC/V.

NOB HILL/RUSSIAN HILL

Alborz looks more like a hotel restaurant than a den of Persian cuisine, but there are flavors here — of barberry and dried lime, among others — you won't easily find elsewhere. (Staff) 1245 Van Ness, SF. 440-4321. Persian, L/D, \$, MC/V.

East Coast West Delicatessen doesn't look like a New York deli (too much space, air, light), but the huge, fattily satisfying Reubens, platters of meat loaf, black-and-white cookies, and all the other standards compare commendably to their East Coast cousins. (Staff) 1725 Polk, SF. 563-3542. Deli, BR/L/D, \$, MC/V.

Matterhorn Restaurant offers dishes that aren't fondue, but fondue (especially with beef) is the big deal and the answer to big appetites. For dessert: chocolate fondue. (PR, 8/03) 2323 Van Ness, SF. 885-6116. Swiss, \$\$, D, AE/DC/DS/MC/V. **O'Reilly's Holy Grail**, a redo of the old Maye's Oyster House that strikes harmonious notes of chapel and lounge, serves a sophisticated and contemporary Cal-Irish menu. (PR, 10/05) 1233 Polk, SF. 928-1233. California/Irish, BR/L/D, \$\$, AE/DS/MC/V.

CIVIC CENTER/TENDERLOIN

Ananda Fuara serves a distinctly Indian-influenced vegetarian menu in the sort of calm surroundings that are increasingly the exception to the rule. (Staff) 1298 Market, SF. 621-1994. Vegetarian, L/D, \$, cash only.

Bodega Bistro has a certain colonial formality — much of the menu is given in French — and it does attract a tony expat crowd. The food is elegant but not fancy (lobster, rack of lamb, both simply presented); if even those are too much, look to the "Hanoi Street Cuisine" items. (PR, 11/05) 607 Larkin, SF. 921-1218. Vietnamese, L/D, \$\$, DC/DS/MC/V.

Jardinère combines an aggressively elegant Pat Kuleto design with the calm confidence of Traci Des Jardins's cooking. The best dishes are unforgettable. (Staff) 300 Grove, SF. 861-5555. California, D, \$\$\$, AE/DC/DISC/MC/V.

Mangosteen radiates lime-green good cheer from its corner perch in the Tenderloin. Inexpensive Vietnamese standards are rendered with thoughtful little touches and an emphasis on the freshest ingredients. (PR, 11/05) 601 Larkin, SF. 776-3999. Vietnamese, L/D, \$, cash only.

Saha serves "Arabic fusion cuisine" — a blend of the Middle East and California — in a cool, spare setting behind the concierge's desk at the Hotel Carlton. One senses the imminence of young rock stars, drawn perhaps by the lovely chocolate fondue. (PR, 9/04) 1075 Sutter, SF. 345-9547. Arabic/fusion, B/BR/D, \$\$\$, AE/DS/MC/V.

HAYES VALLEY

Arlequin offers light Provençal and Mediterranean food for takeout, but the best place to take your stuff is to the sunny, tranquil garden in the rear. (Staff) 3848 Hayes, SF. 863-0926. Mediterranean, B/L/D, \$, MC/V.

CONTINUES ON PAGE 72 »

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Destino reweaves traditional Peruvian flavors into a tapestry of extraordinary vividness and style, and the storefront interior has been given a golden glow that would have satisfied the most restless conquistador. (Staff) 1815 Market, SF. 552-4451. Peruvian, D, \$\$, MC/V.

Suppenküche has a Busvan for Bargains, butcher-block look that gives context to its German cuisine. If you like schnitzel, brats, roasted potatoes, eggs, cheese, cucumber salad, cold cuts, and cold beer, you'll love it here. (Staff) 601 Hayes, SF. 252-9289. German, BR/D, \$, AE/MC/V.

Zuni Cafe is one of the most celebrated — and durable — restaurants in town, perhaps because its kitchen has honored the rustic country cooking of France and Italy for the better part of two decades. (PR, 2/05) 1659 Market, SF. 552-2522. California, B/L/D, \$\$\$, AE/MC/V.

CASTRO/NOE VALLEY/ GLEN PARK

Alice's sits on an obscure corner of outer Noe Valley, but the Chinese food is reliably fresh, tasty, and cheap. The decor is surprisingly elegant too. Wedgewood place settings and displays of blown glass. (Staff) 1599 Sanchez, SF. 282-8999. Chinese, L/D, \$, MC/V.

Amberjack Sushi is like a miniature version of Blowfish or Tokyo Go Go. The more complex dishes, such as a tuna-sashimi tartare with lemon olive oil, are better than the simple, traditional stuff, which can be overkill. (Staff) 1437 Church, SF. 920-1797. Japanese, L/D, \$, AE/MC/V.

Chenery Park is the restaurant Glen Park has been waiting for all these years: a calm, understated setting and an eclectic American menu with plenty of shy twists. (Staff) 693 Chenery, SF. 337-8537. American, D, \$\$, MC/V.

Firefly remains an exemplar of the neighborhood restaurant in San Francisco. It is homey and classy, hip and friendly, serving an American

menu — deftly inflected with ethnic and vegetarian touches — that's the match of any in the city. (PR, 9/04) 4288 24th St., SF. 624-7652. American, D, \$\$\$, AE/MC/V.

Incanto sets the bar a bit higher for neighborhood Italian restaurants. Gorgeous stone-work, a chapel-like wine room, and skillful cooking that ranges confidently from pastas to braised lamb shanks. (Staff) 1550 Church, SF. 641-4500. Italian, D, \$\$, MC/V. **Le Zinc** brings a French bistro presence to 24th Street. The setting is lovely, the food and service uneven and not cheap. But the possibility for something spectacularly good persists. (Staff) 4063 24th St., SF. 647-9400. French, B/BR/L/D, \$\$\$, AAE/MC/V.

HAIGHT/COLE VALLEY/ WESTERN DISTRICT

Alamo Square is an archetype for the "good little place around the corner." Five different kinds of fish are offered next to three cooking techniques and five sauces. (Staff) 803 Fillmore, SF. 440-2828. Seafood, D, \$, MC/V.

Bia's Restaurant and Wine Bar proves hippies know what's what in matters of food and wine. An excellent menu of homey items with Middle Eastern and Persian accents; a tight, widely varied wine list. (PR, 11/04) 1640 Haight, SF. 861-8868. California/Middle Eastern, L/D, \$, AE/DC/MC/V.

Rly could easily host séances, but if you only interest is food and drink you'll be happy too. Good pizzas and small plates; plenty for omnivores and vegetarians alike. Tons of sake drinks to wash it all down. (PR, 1/03) 762 Divisadero, SF. 931-4359. Mediterranean, L/D, \$, AE/DC/DS/MC/V. **Huddell** brings a dash of Big Island conviviality — and Big Island (i.e., big) portions — to a wind- and traffic-swept corner of the big city. Spam, too, if you want it. (PR, 2/03) 5 Masonic, SF. 921-6242. Hawaiian/American, BR/L/D, \$, MC/V.

New Ganges Restaurant is short on style — it is as if the upmarket revolution in vegetarian restaurants never happened — but there is a homemade freshness to the food you won't find at many other places. (PR, 11/03) 775 Frederick, SF. 681-4355. Vegetarian/Indian, L/D, \$, MC/V. **Rottee** isn't the fanciest south Asian restaurant in the

neighborhood, but it is certainly one of the most fragrant, and its bright oranges and yellows (food, walls) do bring good cheer. Excellent tandoori fish. (PR, 12/04) 400 Haight, SF. 552-8309. Indian/Pakistani, L/D, \$, MC/V. **Tsunami Sushi and Sake Bar** brings hip Japanese-style seafood to the already hip Cafe Abir complex. Skull-capped sushi chefs, hefty and innovative rolls. (PR, 5/03) 1306 Geary, SF. 567-7664. Japanese/Sushi, D, \$\$, AE/DC/DS/MC/V.

Winterland borrows the nostalgic name of the one-time ice-skating rink cum music venue that once stood on the spot, but the food is pure — and foamy — Euro avant-garde, served to a glam crowd dressed in shades of SoMa black. For a less vertiginous experience, enjoy the bar menu. (PR, 6/05) 2101 Sutter, SF. 563-5025. International, D, \$\$\$, AE/MC/V.

Zoya takes some finding — it is in the little turret of the Days Inn Motor Lodge at Grove and Gough — but the view over the street's treetsops is bucolic, and the cooking is simple, seasonal, direct, and ingredient-driven. (PR, 12/05) 465 Grove, SF. 626-9692. California, L/D, \$\$, AE/DC/DS/MC/V.

MISSION/BERNAL HEIGHTS/ POTRERO HILL

Al's Cafe Good Food Al's is the best dang diner in town. Everything here is great, from the home fries and eggs to the chili and burgers, and even the toast in between. (Staff) 3286 Mission, SF. 641-8445. American, B/L, 4.

Amica yields virtuosic belly dancing shows with veggie kebabs; smoky, delicate walnut dip with pita chips; and the star choice, Turkish eggplant, a handsome portion of unbelievably tender sautéed aubergine in a marinara sauce. (Staff) 590 Valencia, SF. 621-6213. Middle Eastern, D, \$, MC/V. **Baraka** takes the French-Spanish tapas concept, gives it a beguiling Moroccan accent — harissa, preserved lemons, merguez sausage — and the result is astonishingly good food. (PR, 6/03) 288 Connecticut, SF. 255-0370. Moroccan/Mediterranean, L/D, \$\$, AE/MC/V.

Barney's Gourmet Hamburgers is famed for its garden, but the burgers are pretty good too, and the curly fries are exemplary, if on the rich side. The menu tilts toward the meat side, with plenty of poultry and vegetarian choices. (PR, 6/06) 4138 24th St., SF (other locations in San Francisco, San Rafael, Berkeley, Oakland). 282-7770. American, L/D, \$, MC/V.

Circolo Restaurant and Lounge brings Peruvian- and Asian-influenced cooking into a stylishly barnlike urban space with noise under control, and as always, the food — intense variations on a theme of Tuscan — could not be better. (PR, 2/04) 3621 18th St., SF. 552-4055. California, D, \$\$, MC/V.

Inkas returns Peruvian cooking to its roots in a grand setting (once a house of finance) at the edge of Bernal Hill. Peruvian-style roast chicken is the house specialty and is especially good despite blue-league fries. From ceviche to alfajores, the food is tasty and attractively priced. (PR, 3/06) 3299 Mission, SF. 648-0111. Peruvian, L/D, \$\$, MC/V. **Little Nepal** assembles a wealth of sensory cues (sauna-style blond wood, brass table services) and an Indian-influenced Himalayan cuisine into a singular experience that appeals to all of Bernal Heights and beyond, including tots in their strollers. (PR, 6/03) 925 Cortland, SF. 643-3881. Nepalese, L/D, \$\$, AE/DC/DS/MC/V.

Maverick holds several winning cards, including a menu of first-rate New American food, a clutch of interesting wines by the glass and half glass, and a handsome, spare Mission District setting discreetly cushioned for sound control. (PR, 9/05) 3116 17th St., SF. 863-3061. American, L/D, \$\$, AE/DS/MC/V.

Medjool doesn't offer much by way of its namesake date, food of the ancient pharaohs, but the pan-Mediterranean menu (which emphasizes small plates) is mostly tasty, and the setting is appealingly layered, from a sidewalk terrace to a moody dining room behind a set of big carved-wood doors. (PR, 11/04) 2522 Mission, SF. 550-9055. Mediterranean, B/L/D, \$\$, AE/DS/MC/V.

Pakwan has a little secret: a secluded garden out back. It's the perfect place to enjoy the fiery foods of India and Pakistan. (Staff) 3180 16th St., SF. 255-2440. Indian/Pakistani, L/D, 4, cash only.

Platanos joins the Mission's Roller Derby of fresh-and-Latino cooking with a potpourri menu of dishes from throughout the Spanish-speaking Americas. Good ceviche, an excellent Chile relleno, and of course plantains every which way. (PR, 12/02) 596 Guerrero, SF. 252-9281. Pan-Latino, D, \$, AE/MC/V. **Range** recaptures the dot-com spirit of 1999 with its generically edgy postmodern look, but the food at its best is honest and spirited. The coffee-rubbed pork shoulder, a variation on mole, is a one-in-a-million dish. (PR, 9/05) 862 Valencia, SF. 282-8283. California, D, \$\$, MC/V.

Toad's serves burgers and hot dogs with stylish variability in a Mission setting of surprising elegance and

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The Last Supper Club is really a trattoria, and an impressive one, from its half-lit, reddish-gold interior to its always tasty and sometimes astounding food. Don't miss the Sicilian-style ahi tartare on house-made potato chips. (PR, 3/03) 1499 Valencia, SF. 695-1199. Italian, BR/D, \$, AE/MC/V.

Universal Café does California cooking the way it's meant to be done. The mingled influences of Italy, France, and the Pacific Coast result in such unforgettable dishes as split-pea soup freshened with mint, and a grilled flatbread with melted leeks and salumi. (PR, 1/06) 2814 19th St. SF. 621-4608. California, BR/L/D, \$, AE/DC/MC/V.

Velvet Cantina has the feel of a Nogales brothel and carefree food to match, though the kitchen has some pedigree and upscale aspirations. The mood is one of raucous conviviality, moving to the heartbeat thump of techno music. (PR, 2/06) 3349 23rd St. SF. 648-4142. Mexican, D, \$, MC/V.

Wild Pepper lurks in a laundromat-looking building at the end of a quiet Mission lane, but its food is full of peppery fireworks. Especially good: Szechuan crispy beef, ocean-party soup. Two people can have a feast here and still get out the door for less than \$40. (PR, 4/06) 3601 26th St., SF. 695-7678. Chinese, L/D, \$, MC/V.

Woodward's Garden defies its under-the-free-way setting with a seasonal, reasonably priced California-cuisine menu that explains how a restaurant has managed to thrive for more than a decade in a seemingly unpromising location. Dim lighting can make reading the menu a chore. (PR, 3/05) 1700 Mission, SF. 621-7122. California, D, \$, MC/V.

MARINA/PACIFIC HEIGHTS/LAUREL HEIGHTS

Chouquet's gives stylish little spins to all sorts of French bistro standards, and some nonstandards. The general look and tone is sleek and Parisian. (PR, 6/05) 2500 Washington, SF. 359-0075. French, BR/L/D, \$, AE/DC/DS/MC/V.

Enrique's Cafe is the place to go when you'd rather have a conversation than make a big entrance. Good soups, sandwiches, pizzas, quiches, with a world of influences. (PR, 10/02) 3336 Sacramento, SF. 440-3330. Brazilian/eclectic, B/L, \$, MC/V.

Quince doesn't much resemble its precursor, the Meetinghouse: the setting is more overtly luxurious, the food a pristine Franco-Cal Italian variant rather than hearty New American. Still, it's an appealing place to meet. (PR, 7/04) 1701 Octavia, SF. 775-8500. California, D, \$\$\$, AE/MC/V.

Sociale serves first-rate Cal-Ital food in bewitching surroundings — a heated courtyard, a beautifully lighted interior — that will remind you of some hidden square in some city of Mediterranean Europe. (Staff) 3665 Sacramento, SF. 921-3200. Mediterranean, L/D, \$, AE/DC/DISC/MC/V.

Yaya deals in Mesopotamian cuisine, and that means unusual and haunting combinations of sweet, sour, and salty. The halogen-lit setting of blue and gold includes a trompe l'oeil mural of an ancient Babylonian city. (PR, 6/05) 2424 Van Ness, SF. 440-0455. Mesopotamian, D, \$, MC/V.

Yuzu darts from east to west, but the food at its best transcends categories and the gathering cliché "fusion" and achieves its own sort of integrity. The namesake yuzu, a notably sour Asian citrus fruit, figures throughout the menu, in vinaigrettes, salads, and desserts. The interior is discreetly handsome and rather dimly lit, the hetero vibe resounding. (PR, 4/06) 3347 Fillmore, SF. 775-1873. Cal-Asian, D, \$, AE/MC/V.

SUNSET

Chouchou Patisserie Artisanale and French Bistro is the place to go for pastry, whether you like it as an edible cap on your pot pies or as a crust beneath your fruit or chocolate tarts. French standards — charcuterie, onion soup — are executed with verve. (PR, 12/03) 400 Dewey, SF. 242-0960. French, L/D, \$, MC/V.

Dragonfly serves the best contemporary Vietnamese food in town, in a calmer environment and at a fraction of the cost of better-known places. (PR, 8/05) 420 Judah, SF. 661-7755. Vietnamese, L/D, \$, AE/MC/V.

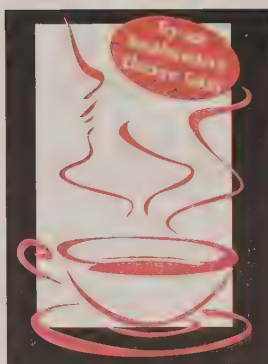
Jimisan brings a stylish and value-conscious sushi option to the Ninth Avenue restaurant row. Good cooked stuff too. (PR, 8/05) 1380 Ninth Ave., SF. 564-8989. Japanese/sushi, L/D, \$, AE/DS/MC/V.

Ladda's Seaview Thai Cuisine gazes upon the mists and surfers of Ocean Beach. The kitchen divides its attentions between Thai and American standards. Free parking in the always near-empty lot. (PR, 5/05) 1225 La Playa, SF. 665-0185. Thai/American, B/L/D, \$, AE/MC/V.

Pomelo big portions of Asian- and Italian-inspired noodle dishes. If you need something quick, cheap, and fresh, pop in here. (Staff) 92 Judah, SF. 731-6175. Noodles, L/D, \$, cash only.

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CONTINUES ON PAGE 74»



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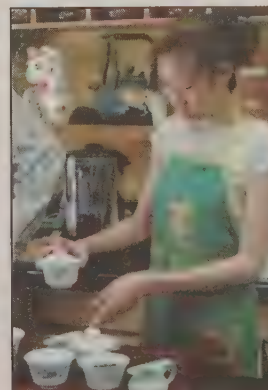
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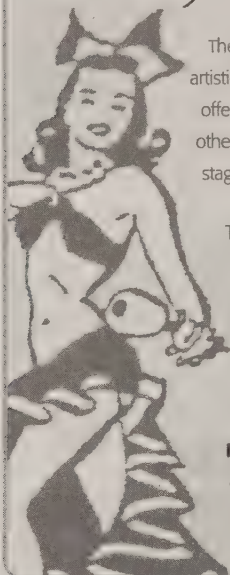
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FOOD + DRINK

SUNSET
CONT'S

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RICHMOND

Blue Fin Sushi does indeed have a blue-finned sport fish mounted over the bar and, more interesting, an attached sports bar, Prime Time, where you can enjoy nigiri and cheeseburgers. Lots of imaginative, Japanese-style cooked dishes. (PR, 3/05) 1314 Clement, SF. 387-2441. Sushi/American, D, \$\$, MC/V.

Chapaul serves some of the best food in the city — at shockingly reasonable prices. The French cooking reflects as much style and imagination as any California menu. (Staff) 1408 Clement, SF. 750-9787. French, D, \$\$, AE/DC/MC/V. **Katla's**, a Russian Tea Room evokes the bourgeois romance of old Russia, and the classic Slavic food is carefully prepared and presented. Silken Cimean port is served in a tiny glass shaped like a Cossack pot. (PR, 12/04) 600 Fifth Ave., SF. 668-9292. Russian, L/D, \$\$, AE/CB/DC/DS/MC/V.

Mai's Restaurant On the basis of the hot-and-sour shrimp and pineapple alone, Mai's deserves a line out the door. (Staff) 316 Clement, SF. 221-3046. Vietnamese, L/D, 4, AE/DC/MC/V.

Pachi's brings sophisticated Peruvian cooking to outer Clement. The menu includes a few Spanish dishes such as paella, but the food in the main emphasizes those longtime Peruvian staples, seafood and the potato, each in a variety of guises and subtly spiced. The setting is handsome, though on the spare side of spare. (PR, 2/05) 1801 Clement, SF. 422-0502. Peruvian, BR/D, \$\$, AE/DC/DS/MC/V.

Rorian Lounge serves a variety of soju cocktails to help wash down all those Asian tapes. Beware the kimchee. Lovely curvaceous banquettes. (Staff) 3809 Geary, SF. 221-5095. Asian, D, \$, AE/MC/V.

BAYVIEW/HUNTERS
POINT/SOUTH

Cable Car Coffee Shop Atmospherically speaking, you're looking at your basic downtown South San Fran, old-style joint, one that serves a great Pacific Scramble for \$4.95 and the most perfect hash browns to be tasted. (Staff) 423 Grand, South SF. (650) 952-9533. American, B/BR/L, 4. **JoAnn's Cafe and Pantry** has gotten some word-of-mouth recommendations as a dive, but it serves upscale breakfasts with decidedly nondie dishes like low-fat chicken basil sausage, bagels, and homemade muffins and scones. (Staff) 1131 El Camino Real, South SF. (650) 872-2810. American, B/L, 4. **Young's Cafe** A restaurant full of cheap, big, decent Chinese food, Young's serves up 15 rice dishes, most of them \$2.95, and 64 other standard Chinese things. Only four of those are more than five bucks. (Staff) 732 22nd St., SF. 285-6046. Chinese, L/D, 4.

BERKELEY/EMERYVILLE/NORTH

Chez Panisse may be an old-timer, but a devotion to the best seasonal ingredients (often organic) grilled on the wood-fired open hearth means the restaurant's distinctive Franco-Cal-Ital signature remains unmistakable, and unmatched. (PR, 2/03) 1517 Shattuck, Berk. Cafe, (510) 548-5049, L/D, \$\$; restaurant, (510) 548-5525, \$\$\$; California, AE/DC/DISC/MC/V.

Lalime's is a long-standing institution in East Bay haute cuisine culture, but there's nothing institutional about the attentive service or the creative and gorgeous dishes. (Staff) 1329 Gilman, Berk. (510) 527-9838. French/Mediterranean, D, \$\$, AE/DC/MC/V.

Sam's Log Cabin Daily special egg scrambles, great griddle cakes and corn cakes, and exceptional scones and muffins top the morning fare, which also includes gourmet sausage and bacon, hot and cold cereals, and organic coffee. (Staff) 945 San Pablo Ave., Berk. (510) 558-0494. American, B/L, 4, no credit cards. California/Mediterranean, BR/L/D, \$\$, AE/DISC/MC/V.

OAKLAND/ALAMEDA

Arizmendi is a worker-owned bakery where bread rolls out in seemingly infinite varieties — potato, Asiago, sesame-sunflower. (Staff) 3265 Lakeshore, Oakl. (510) 268-8849. Bakery, B/L/D, 4. Not wheelchair accessible.

Gerardo's Mexican Restaurant offers all the expected taqueria fare. But a main reason to visit is to pick up a dozen of Maria's wonderfully down-home chicken or pork tamales. (Staff) 3811 MacArthur, Oakl. (510) 531-5255. Mexican, B/L/D, 4-\$. **Mama's Royal Cafe** Breakfast is the draw here — even just-coffee-for-me types might succumb when confronted with waffles, French toast, pancakes, tofu scramble, huevos rancheros, and 20 different omelets. (Staff) 4012 Broadway, Oakl. (510) 547-7600. American, B/L, 4. **sfbg**

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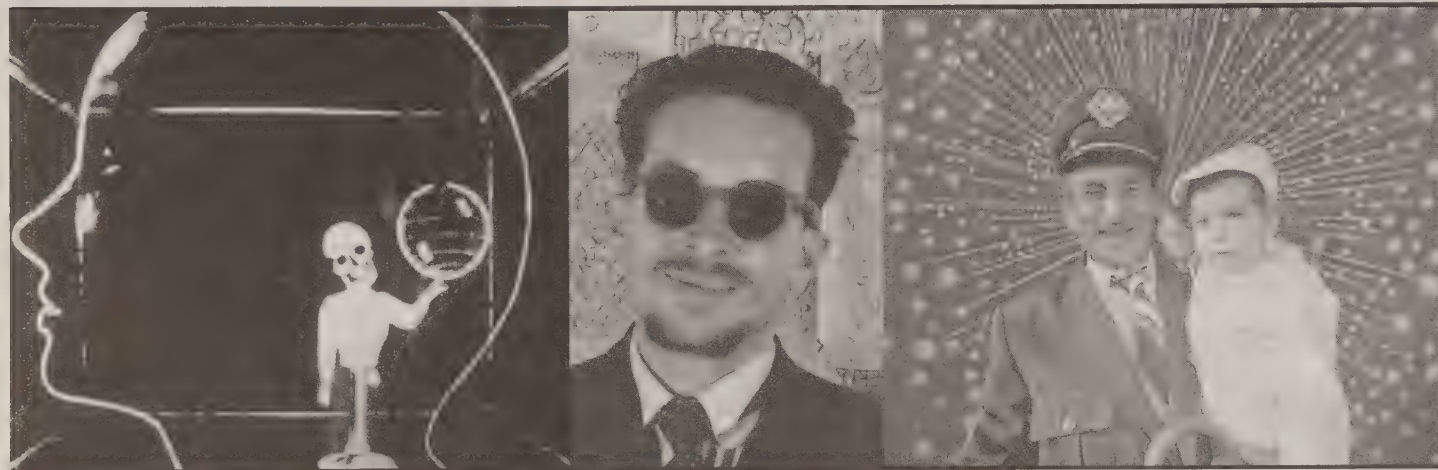
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Heaven and Earth Magic (left) is just one of many classic epic efforts by the late, great alchemist and folk anthologist Harry Smith (center). From the Czech Republic comes *The Shutka Book of Records* (right), bearing many weird *Mondo Cane*-ish delights.



Occult classic

SFIFF taps into the magic of Harry Smith

By Jonathan L. Knapp
> a&eletters@sfbg.com

Harry Smith is a folk hero. Smith's masterwork, the definitive, meticulously edited *Anthology of American Folk Music* (1952), was the bible of the '60s folk movement that spawned Dylan, Baez, Fahey, and others. To discover it is to stumble into a forgotten, marginalized world, a portal to — as Greil Marcus put it in his book about Dylan's *Basement Tapes* — “a weird but clearly recognizable America.”

Compiled from scratchy 78s of the late '20s and early '30s and split into three two-LP volumes — *Ballads, Social Music, and Songs* — the collection seamlessly mixes country with blues, Cajun dances with fiery sermons. Tales of murder, suicide, plagues, and bizarre hallucinations wander alongside familiar characters from American mythology: Casey Jones, Stackalee (a.k.a. Stagger Lee), and US presidents and their assassins. These figures regularly appear in American stories and songs — from the *Anthology* and elsewhere — becoming recognizable but, like all great folk heroes, constantly evolving and remaining a mystery.

And so it is with Smith. A grand self-mythologizer, Smith told contradictory stories about his life: Born in 1923, in Portland, Ore., to an occult-obsessed teacher and a salmon fishery worker, he claimed his mother was the Russian princess Anastasia and his father, Aleister Crowley, a British writer, painter, and famed Satanist. Smith dabbled in many different art forms. In addition to editing the *Anthology*, he recorded Native American tribal rituals, the first Fugs album, and many of Allen Ginsberg's recordings. He was also a prolific filmmaker, painter, writer, and all-around eccentric.

Smith's friends — Ginsberg, Jonas Mekas, and Robert Frank among them — tell stories about a mad trickster genius on amphetamines with an

encyclopedic knowledge of old music and art, fascinated by alchemy and anthropology, constantly begging for money, always experimenting with some new project. As a filmmaker, he worked solely in the abstract. His early films from the '40s and '50s (released in 1957 as *Early Abstractions*) are protopschdelic: Colorful, hand-painted geometric shapes bounce and morph into one another.

His great cinematic statement, however, is 1962's *Heaven and Earth Magic*. An hour-long exercise in black-and-white animation, it appropriately comes with a disputed history. Mekas claims the initial print was in color and projected with a special apparatus that Smith designed and then destroyed, tossing it out the window onto the streets of Manhattan.

Whatever the reality, what survives is strange, unique, and frequently wonderful. White cutouts from old catalogs, advertisements, and religious texts float and pirouette through the all-black frame. A loose story emerges of a Victorian lady who loses a watermelon, visits the dentist, and travels to and from heaven. Its mystical and historical imagery is impossible to fully grasp without years of study — or, perhaps, Smith's brain.

It's clearly the work of a man who saw the world differently than most of us do — both because he could and because he wanted to. Smith died in 1991, shortly after accepting a Grammy for *Anthology*. This screening of *Heaven and Earth Magic* — complete with a live score by local avant-pop outfit Deerhoof — should demonstrate what Smith himself surely knew: He was an American original, an artist difficult to categorize and impossible to ignore. **SFBG**

HEAVEN AND EARTH MAGIC
(Harry Smith, USA, 1962)
April 27, 9:45 p.m., Castro

SAN FRANCISCO INTERNATIONAL FILM FESTIVAL: WEEK TWO

WED/26

▣ **Art School Confidential** (Terry Zwigoff, USA, 2005). Pulp with a deep noirish cast, this second collabo between *Ghost World* director Terry Zwigoff and cartoonist Daniel Clowes jumps off the artist's scathingly on-target *Eighthall* strip of the same name, taking aim at misbegotten would-be genius Jerome (Max Minghella), on campus with a serial killer on the loose, and painting Clowes's comic exposé even blacker. Jerome's hilarious and progressively unsettling trajectory through the art school con is studded with such delicious characters as condescending, failed-artist instructor John Malkovich, haughty art history teacher Anjelica Huston, wisecracking friend Joel David Moore, and graduate burnout/washout “guru” Jim Broadbent. 6:30 p.m., Kabuki (Kimberly Chun)

▣ **The Wild Blue Yonder** (Werner Herzog, Germany/England/France, 2005). Herzog's latest dispatch from the reaches of inner and outer space orbits around found footage from NASA, mesmerizing underwater-camera work by Bay Area *Grizzly Man* player Henry Kaiser, and supposed space oddity Brad Dourif, furrowing his brow with all his might and telling tales of aquatic constellations elsewhere and environmental devastation on his adopted planet Earth. This elegiac, doomsaying — and at times pixieish — riff on Herzogian themes of hell- and heaven-bent exploration, vision quests, survival, and a certain rootlessness finds the auteur delving further into his *Grizzly* technique of piecing together a compelling narrative from whatever he can find in his cupboard. 7:30 p.m., Castro (as part of “An Evening with Werner Herzog”) (Chun)

THURS/27

▣ **See You in Space** (József Pacskovsky, Hungary, 2005). Hungarian writer-director Pacskovsky's latest is another whimsical contraption of crisscrossing multiple story lines that sigh and shrug over the human condition. An astronaut stuck in orbit grows desperate as (back on Earth) his wife leaves him for a suave magician; a microbiologist stalks, woos, and wins a virginal African refugee; a young hairdresser edges toward romance with an elderly client; a criminal psychologist finds herself attracted to a jailed murder suspect. Sprawling cross the globe, these alternately sardonic, fantastical, and silly threads are united by a sense that obsessive love is as unavoidable as it is inevitably disappointing. 4 p.m., Kabuki. Also Tues/2, 8:45 p.m., and May 4, 5:45 p.m., Kabuki (Dennis Harvey)

▣ **The Shutka Book of Records** (Aleksandar Manic, Czech Republic, 2005). A Roma town in Macedonia stuffed with self-proclaimed champions is the setting for this weirdly joyful film, which is far too bizarre to be anything but a doc. Here's some of what you'll see: the “most powerful dervish in the world”; *Mondo Cane*-ish interludes (one word: *circumcisions!*); a woman known as “The Terminator” whose stock-in-trade is exorcising evil genies; break-dancers and boxers; exceedingly competitive Turkish music fanatics; and a young butcher named Elvis. My head was about to explode after I saw this film... but in a good way. 1:45 p.m., Kabuki. Also Sun/30, 12:45 p.m., Kabuki (Cheryl Eddy)

The Sun (Alexander Sokurov, Russia/Italy/France/Switzerland, 2005). Third in a planned quartet of features about figureheads

CONTINUES ON PAGE 76»

FROM THE DIRECTOR AND WRITER OF THE THIRD MAN

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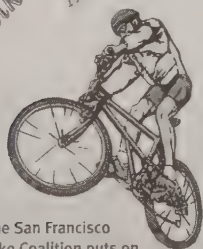
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GUARDIAN

Tragic replay

Are filmgoers ready for *United 93*?

By Cheryl Eddy
> cheryl@sfbg.com

Filmed for the most part outside London, and shot by Brit Paul Greengrass (*The Bourne Supremacy*), *United 93* is nonetheless a wholly American tale — one that still reverberates with enough unsettling intensity that it's questionable whether or not audiences will want to see it on the big screen. In 50 years, perhaps, *United 93* won't sting so much; it'll be easier to view it in the context of other Hollywood docudramas mined from national tragedies (and, fortunately, *United 93* is directed with far better taste and skill than, say, *Pearl Harbor*; we'll see how Oliver Stone's *World Trade Center* fares when it opens later in '06).

As you'd expect, a palpable sense of inevitability haunts *United 93*'s every

frame. As the minutes of Sept. 11 tick by, we don't really get to know the film's characters as individuals. Instead, *United 93* switches between the doomed flight's crew and passengers (all of whom, including the four jumpy hijackers, are represented by actors chosen for their physical resemblance to the actual people) and the increasingly frantic folks on the ground (several air traffic controllers and military types play themselves). Greengrass's trademark handheld camera is well suited to capturing chaos; one of his few overtly cinematic concessions is the film's score, which floats in occasionally to heighten tension that's already running into the red.

Though it focuses on the horror, and heroism, wrought by Sept. 11, *United 93* also highlights the day's ill-managed official response. Without pointing fingers at anyone in particular

FILM



San Francisco-bound passengers (including David Alan Basche as Todd Beamer, center) frantically plot to overpower a quartet of hijackers in *United 93*. | PHOTO BY JONATHAN OLLEY

(except the prez, who's mentioned as being unreachable, and the MIA veep), the initial disbelief, waves of conflicting information, and general confusion are made achingly clear: Even after WTC-bound American Airlines flight 11 becomes a confirmed hijack, flight 93 idles on the tarmac, eagerly awaiting takeoff. **SFBG**

UNITED 93

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www.united93movie.com

SFIFF: WEEK TWO

Week two CONT.

of 20th-century totalitarianism — earlier ones focused on Hitler and Lenin; the fourth is yet to be announced — this latest by Sokurov (*Mother and Son*, *Russian Ark*) focuses on Emperor Hirohito (Issey Ogata) at World War II's end. The first half is as claustrophobic and tedious as the emperor's underground bunker. Things get more interesting when he emerges to meet with the occupying forces' General MacArthur (Robert Dawson) and sheds his age-old status as a living god — a move that lets the Japanese people off the hook while allowing a bookish, mild-mannered monarch to finally live like a human being. This is a fascinating situation as well as a key historic and cultural moment. But *The Sun* is heavy going; seldom has a subject generated so little of Sokurov's trademark metaphysical poetry, despite some striking moments. 9:15 p.m., *Kabuki*. Also Sat/29, 3:15 p.m., *Kabuki*; and May 3, 7 p.m., *PEA* (Harvey)

FRI/28

Executive Koala (Minoru Kawasaki, *Japan*, 2005). It all starts so promisingly: An overworked koala, who is a celebrated executive in a pickle company, spends his time away from the office in bed with his doting human girlfriend. When she turns up dead, the cops come after him, causing our marsupial hero to question his

assumed gentleness and his past. But this ridiculous Japanese comedy fails to build upon its initial setup; once the novelty of a guy in a koala suit wears off, so does the enjoyment. 10:30 p.m., *Kabuki*. Also Tues/2, 4:15 p.m., *Kabuki* (Jonathan L. Knapp)

SAT/29

The Descent (Neil Marshall, *England*, 2005). What's worse than being trapped underground? How about being trapped underground with creepy cave dwellers — creepy, hungry cave dwellers? And maybe, just maybe, losing your mind at the same time? Believe the hype: British import *The Descent* is the scariest movie since *The Blair Witch Project*, thanks to a killer premise, flawless pacing and casting, and *Dog Soldiers* writer-director Neil Marshall's unconcealed love for the horror genre. 11:30 p.m., *Kabuki*. Also Mon/1, 4 p.m., *Kabuki* (Eddy)

Jonestown: The Life and Death of Peoples Temple (Stanley Nelson, *USA*, 2006). Nearly 30 years after the deaths of more than 900 people in the Guyanese jungle, Nelson's deeply affecting documentary replays Jim Jones's final, twisted address: "We didn't commit suicide — we committed an act of revolutionary suicide protesting the conditions of an inhumane world." That speech sets in motion what the doc tabs "the largest mass 'suicide' in modern history." Using a remarkable cache of

vintage footage, as well as candid interviews with Peoples Temple survivors, relatives, and other eyewitnesses, Nelson examines the massacre with a journalist's eye. Why the tragedy happened may never be explained, but seldom before has the *how* of Jonestown been so clearly delineated. 6:15 p.m., *Kabuki*. Also Sun/30, 7 p.m., *Intersection for the Arts*; Mon/1, 7 p.m., *PFA*; and Tues/2, 4:30 p.m., *Kabuki* (Eddy)

Wide Awake (Alan Berliner, *USA*, 2005). Documentary filmmaker Berliner (*Nobody's Business*, *The Sweetest Sound*) takes his celebrated self-scrutiny to dizzying heights in this portrait of the artist as an insomniac. The subject is specific, but it's readily apparent how sleeplessness touches Berliner's life and work. As his trademark virtuosic montage editing flashes by (like many heralded avant-garde filmmakers before him, Berliner meticulously constructs scenes and meaning from the detritus of film history), we realize the extent to which artistry can be tied to neurosis — a message unusual in its candor and transparency. 5:45 p.m., *PFA*. Also Sun/30, 4:15 p.m., *Aquarius*; and Tues/2, 9:30 p.m., *Kabuki* (Max Goldberg)

SUN/30

Half Nelson (Ryan Fleck, *USA*, 2005). Dan Dunne (Ryan Gosling) is both an inspiring, idealistic teacher of history and a long-suffering addict of crack and cocaine in

this challenging character study. Aside from a laughable reliance on stroking his scruff to convey existential angst, Gosling is largely up to the task of playing the bipolar lead, but the swaying narration of his character's downward spiral feels shapeless. Still, the scenes in which Dan and a knowing student (Shareeka Epps) guardedly discuss immobility, race, and life in Brooklyn avoid the histrionics that mar typical teacher films, making *Half Nelson* a powerful, if overly ambitious first feature for writer-director Fleck and writer-producer Anna Boden. 6:15 p.m., *Kabuki*. Also Tues/2, 9 p.m., *Kabuki* (Goldberg)

TUES/2

Backstage (Emmanuelle Bercot, *France*, 2005). Emmanuelle Seigner convincingly plays — and sings as — sexily imperious Euro-pop goddess Lauren in this headlong remix of *All about Eve*, *Persona*, and the psycho-stalker genre. She commands hysterical worship from her fans, few being more hysterical than suburban teenager Lucie (Isild Le Besco). Improbably, the latter manages to insinuate herself into the spoiled, neurotic, rather awful pop princess's inner circle as new confidante, servant, and toy. But if Lauren is a mess, Lucie might well turn out to be the much sicker puppy. Nasty fun, smartly directed. 7 p.m., *Kabuki* (also with Zoom! party at Roe, 9:30 p.m.) (Harvey) **SFBG**

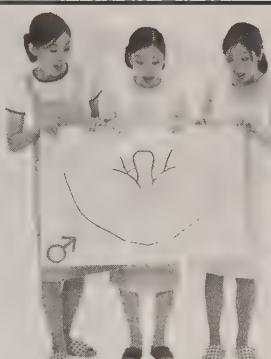
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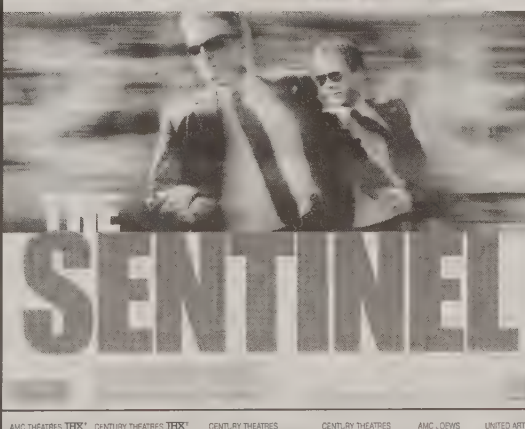
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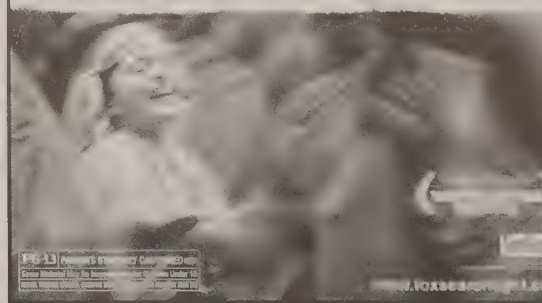
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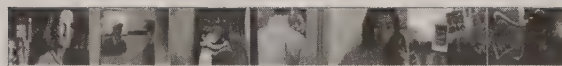
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on Friday, May 5th

"Stanley Kubrick Series"

PREVIEW During shooting of 1964's *Dr. Strangelove*, production designer Ken Adam chauffeured the movie's director, Stanley Kubrick, to and from the set every day. Adam had a zippy sports car at the time — a Jaguar — but the legendary filmmaker refused to let him drive it over 30 miles an hour. It's a testament to his growing phobias, to be sure, but anyone who knows anything about Kubrick knows fear was also an excuse: Even when someone else was behind the wheel, he was still in the driver's seat. Kubrick may have been a notorious tyrant on set (at home he was more of an eccentric, cat-loving nebbish), but that obsessive need for control became a key ingredient in the invention of the modern-day black comedy (*Dr. Strangelove*), the making of the first mass-market "art" film (2001: *A Space Odyssey*), the creation of cinematic classics from "unfilmable" novels (*Lolita*, *A Clockwork Orange*), and even the development of the Steadicam (for 1980's *The Shining*). Throw in a couple more of the best antiwar works ever committed to celluloid (say, *Paths of Glory* and *Full Metal Jacket*), and you have the start of a pretty good case for unfettered despotism. Just imagine how true-to-life his unmade dream project *Napoleon* would have been. (Michelle Deveraux)

STANLEY KUBRICK SERIES Sat/29-May 3, Castro Theatre

429 Castro, SF. \$6-\$10. (415) 621-6120, www.castrotheatre.com

Film listings are edited by Cheryl Eddy. Reviewers are Robert Avila, Kimberly Chun, Sabrina Crawford, Michelle Deveraux, Susan Gerhard, Max Goldberg, Dennis Harvey, Johnny Ray Huston, Laurie Koh, Lynn Rapoport, and Chuck Stephens. The film intern is Jonathan L. Knapp. For rep house showtimes, see Rep Clock, page B4. For first-run showtimes, see Movie Clock at www.sfbg.com.

SAN FRANCISCO INTERNATIONAL FILM FESTIVAL

The 49th San Francisco International Film Festival runs through May 4. Main venues are the Castro Theatre, 429 Castro, SF; Kabuki 8 Theatres, 1881 Post, SF; PFA Theater, 2575 Bancroft, Berk; and Landmark's Aquarius Theatre, 430 Emerson, Palo Alto. Satellite venues this week include Baycat, 2415 Third St, SF; Intersection for the Arts, 466 Valencia, SF; Swedish American Hall, 2174 Market, SF; and El Rio, 3158 Mission, SF. Tickets (most shows \$7.50-\$11) are available by calling (925) 866-9559 or visiting www.sfi.org. All times p.m. unless otherwise noted. For commentary, see pages 75-76.

WED/26

Castro "Film Society Directing Award: Werner Herzog" with *The Wild Blue Yonder* 7:30.
Kabuki *Twelve Disciples of Nelson Mandela* 1, 9. *You Are My Sunshine* 2:30. *Perpetual Motion* 3:10. *The Wayward Cloud* 3:30. *Play 4*, *All About Love* 5:15. *The Dignity of the Nobodies* 6. *Iraq in Fragments* 6:15. *Art School Confidential* 6:30. *Gabrielle* 7:30. *Le Petit Lieutenant* 9:15. *Princess Raccoon* 9:30. *Delicate Crime* 9:45.
PFA "The Heart of Guy Maddin" (shorts program) 7. *The Lost Domain* 9.

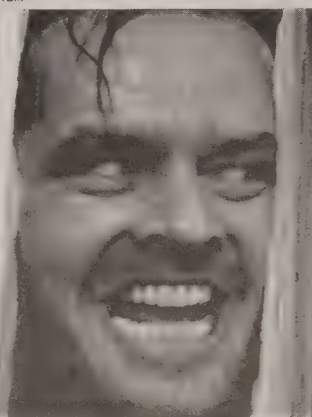
THURS/27

Castro *The House of Himiko* 5:45. *Heaven and Earth Magic* with *Deerhoof* 9:45.
Kabuki *Runners High* 10am. *Lili and the Baobab* 1. *The Shukta Book of Records* 1:45. *Iberia* 2:45. "Friends: Lost and Found" (shorts program) 3:45. *See You in Space* 4. *Bashing* 5. *The Life I Want* 6. *Seeds of Doubt* 6:15. "Pocket Cinema" (shorts program) 6:30. *Look Both Ways* 7. *The Dignity of the Nobodies* 8:30. *Cycling Chronicles: Landscapes the Boy Saw* 8:45. *American Blackout* 9. *The Sun* 9:15. *PFA Twelve Disciples of Nelson Mandela* 9:30. *Three Times* 8:30.

FRI/28

Castro *The Lost Domain* noon. *Princess Raccoon* 2:30. "Peter J. Owens Award: Ed Harris" with *A Flash of Green* 7:30.
Kabuki *American Blackout* 1. *October 17, 1961* 3:30. *Obaba* 4. *The Betrayal* 5:30. *Strangers in the Neighborhood* 6:15. *Play* 6:30. "Scribble, Scapple,

FILM



I.C. You" (shorts program) 7. *Smiling in a War Zone* 8. *Illumination* 8:45. *Iraq in Fragments* 9. *One Long Winter Without Fire* 9:45. *Executive Koala* 10:30. *PFA Gabrielle* 7. *The Wayward Cloud* 9:15.

SAT/29

Baycat *Favela Rising* 8.
Kabuki "Talk Cinema #3" 10am. *Looking for Madonna* 12:45. "Kanbar Award: Jean-Claude Carriere" with *Belle de Jour* 1. "Youth Gone Wild" (shorts program) 1. *The Silent Holy Stones* 1:15. "Panel: The Revolution, Now Playing" 2. *Runners High* 3:30. *Gubra* 4. "State of Cinema Address: Tilda Swinton" 5:30. *News from Afar* 6. *Jonestown: The Life and Death of Peoples Temple* 6:15. *A Short Film about the Indo Nacional (or The Prolonged Sorrow of Filipinos)* 6:30. *Romance and Cigarettes* 8. *Iron Island* 9. *Brothers of the Head* 9:15. *Three Times* 9:30. *The Descent* 11:30.
PFA *The Dignity of the Nobodies* 1. *The Giant Buddhas* 3:45. *Wide Awake* 5:45. *Regular Lovers* 8:15.

SUN/30

Aquarius *Bashing* 2:15. *Wide Awake* 4:15. *The Life I Want* 7. *Obaba* 9:45.
Intersection *Jonestown: The Life and Death of Peoples Temple* 7.
Kabuki "Panel: Transformation Nation" noon. *Shukta Book of Records* 12:45. *Look Both Ways* 1. "Friends: Lost and Found" (shorts program) 1:15. *The Bridge* 2:45. *Factotum* 3. *Northeast* 3:15. *Taking Father Home* 3:30. "Seminar: Adapting Literary Work for the Screen" 5:15. *Beyond the Call* 6. *Half Nelson* 6:15. *The Betrayal* 6:30. *Fugitive Prayers* 6:45. *Solo Dios Sabe* 8:45. *Workingman's Death* 9. *Underground Game* 9:15. *Shooting Under Fire* 9:30.
PFA *Into Great Silence* 1:30. *Belle de Jour* 5. *Princess Raccoon* 8.

MON/1

Aquarius *The Dignity of the Nobodies* 7. *Perpetual Motion* 9:30.
Kabuki *The Bridge* 1. *Solo Dios Sabe* 3. *The Giant Buddhas* 3:45. *The Descent* 4. *American Blackout* 4:15. "Book Signing: Not Quite a Memoir" 5:30. *A Short Film About the Indo Nacional (or The Prolonged Sorrow of Filipinos)* 6. *One Long Winter Without Fire* 6:15. *Favela Rising* 6:30. *Encounter* 6:45. *Sa-Kwa* 8:45. *Northeast* 9. *Clouds of Yesterday* 9:15. "Addictive TV" (shorts program) 9:45.
PFA *Jonestown: The Life and Death of Peoples Temple* 7. *Iron Island* 9:10.
Swedish "Porchlight" (spoken word program) 7.
TUES/2
Aquarius *Illumination* 6:45. *Adam's Apples* 9:30. **Kabuki** "Live 'N' Learn" (shorts program) 1:30.

News from Afar 3. *The Blossoming of Maximo Oliveros* 3:30. *Executive Koala* 4:15. *Jonestown: The Life and Death of Peoples Temple* 4:30. "Book Signing: I Wake Up Screening" 5:45. *Cycling Chronicles: Landscapes the Boy Saw* 6. *Brothers of the Head* 6:30. *Backstage* 7. *Clouds of Yesterday* 7. *See You in Space* 8:45. *Half Nelson* 9. *Wide Awake* 9:30.
PFA "Fugitive Prayers" (shorts program) 7. *The Bridge* 9:20.
El Rio *Runners High* 8:30.

OPENING

Akeelah and the Bee A young girl (Keke Palmer) dreams of winning the National Spelling Bee; Laurence "Morpheus" Fishburne plays her coach. (1:42) *Century 20, Century Plaza, Grand Lake, Orinda, Presidio, Shattuck.*

22 heroes usually seem so disillusioned you'd think they were born that way — a notion their conveniently cloudy, scandal-tinged backstories do nothing to counter. Atypical among Greene tales in that it takes place in an orderly, well-to-do British domicile, this 1948 short story adaptation nonetheless suggests one formative path that might lead to such adult dissipation and disappointment. Its protagonist is eight-year-old Phil (Bobby Henrey), the only child of a London-based French diplomat who is currently, as is often the case, abroad. Entombed in a palatial embassy with little parental oversight, no siblings or peer friends, needy Phil turns to impeccable butler Baines (Ralph Richardson). The latter does his best to balance professional role and substitute-father one, while dealing with problems of his own: a shrewish wife (Sonia Rendell) who's onto his affair with a younger secretary (Michele Morgan). When someone dies, the police arrive with their own suspicions, and in his misapplied loyalty, Phil lies — making the situation even worse. *The Fallen Idol* is about filibuster, childhood's limited ability to grasp adult reality, the truth-killing confines of class-dictated English reticence, and how youthful innocence can end with a joyless crash as a result of all the above. Somewhat overshadowed by the more fashionably noisish Carol Reed-directed films before and after it (*Odd Man Out*, *The Third Man*), this feature has been too little seen for too long. Newly released in a spruced-up print, it's a classic well worth rediscovering. (1:35) *Lumiere, Smith Rafael* (Harvey) **Game** 6 Where Don DeLillo launched his behemoth novel *Underworld* with a minutely detailed account of the deciding game of the 1953 play-off race, the characters in the author's screenplay — his first — for *Game* 6 ricochet off the 1986 World Series contest in which the cursed Red Sox saw their hopes roll through Bill Buckner's bowed legs. Michael Keaton stars as Nicky Rogan, a pessimistic New York playwright reckoning with career, family, and, yes, a lifelong devotion to the Sox. DeLillo's story has many of the fantastical elements that color the author's celebrated books: Nicky dizzy-

ingly wanders (or perhaps, descends) through the city, engaging philosophical dialogues with cabbies and, at one point, bumping into a noxious pipeline explosion. One wonders what a talented surrealist like David Lynch or Paul Thomas Anderson might have done with this day-in-the-life, but alas, we're stuck with Michael Hoffman, who can't seem to make anything cinematic out of DeLillo's talky script. (1.27) *Roxie*. (Goldberg)

Hard Candy After prolonged chat-room flirtation, photographer Jeff (Patrick Wilson) meets 14-year-old Hayley (Ellen Page) in a café, finding she's the Lolita of every jaded aficionado's dreams — an almost too-perfect mix of schoolgirl awkwardness, naiveté, and precocious sexual aggression. She even strong-arms him (well, it doesn't take much) into taking her back to his place in the LA hills on their first "date." It's a secluded, expensively modern spread decorated largely with the provocative portraits of young girls that have made his name. Jeff insists he's never, ever had actual physical relations with any of the under-18 models. Still, he's brought Hayley here alone, left her bust out the vodka, and start behaving with inebriated abandon. If you've read anything about *Hard Candy* you'll already know what's coming. (If not, insert Spoiler Alert here.) Suffice it to say the "innocent" little girl soon turns tables on the possible would-be seducer who's over twice her age. When cocktail-drugged Jeff regains consciousness, he's tied down and in for a very long afternoon of accusation, terror, torture, maybe worse. *Hard Candy* is cleverly written (Brian Nelson), sharply directed (David Slade), and acted with remarkable skill under the circumstances. It means to shock, and does, with some notably unpleasant stretches (especially for male viewers). But it's also the kind of move that you may realize, five minutes after the lights have gone up, has pretzeled its own logic every melodramatic which way in order to supposedly expose the brutal truths about a "controversial" subject (i.e., pederasty). How many 14-year-olds can boast world-class acting skills, the ingenuity of a master criminal, and the fiery verbal rhetoric of Catherine MacKinnon, Andrea Dworkin, and company? Hayley isn't a credible character any more than *Hard Candy* reflects sexual abuse realities. Both are elaborate contrivances that, for all the Lolitas-got-a-gun-now posturing, ultimately serve up older exploitation-movie sensationalism. *Showgirls* thought it was about empowering women too. (1.39) *Bridge, California, Empire*. (Harvey)

RV A family vacation goes haywire in this comedy starring Robin Williams. (1.55) *Century 20, Century Plaza, Grand Lake, Presidio, Shattuck*.

Sisters in Law The latest look at international women's issues by director Kim Longinotto (*Divorce Iranian Style*, *The Day I Will Never Forget*) travels to the West African country of Cameroon, where female judges and lawyers are making great strides for equal rights in a place where cultural sexism remains rampant. A series of *Law and Order*: SVU-style offenders — wife beaters, child rapists — come before the court as the doc progresses; along the way, Longinotto and codirector Florence Ayisi manage to capture the community's first convictions for spousal abuse in nearly two decades. Even sweeter than these victories, however, is watching the sharp-tongued titular women dress down the men who come before them for judgement; they also counsel female victims who are just beginning to realize they have rights — and the power to assert them. At times, *Sisters in Law* feels like watching a revolution in progress. (1.44) *Balboa*. (Eddy)

Stick It The writer of *Bring It On* penned this teen movie set in the world of competitive gymnastics. (1.43) *Century 20, Century Plaza*.

United 93 See "Tragic Replay," page 76. (1.40) *Century 20, Century Plaza, Presidio, Shattuck*. **Water** A tumultuous shoot (protestors in India forced the production to shut down and eventually relocate to Sri Lanka) and an underrepresented subject — the plight of traditional Hindu widows — make *Water* destined to garner praise as "an important film." Furthermore, Deepa Mehta's seventh feature, the third in her elemental trilogy (following *Fire* and *Earth*), looks the part: It wraps its historical plot (1930s India) and feminist message in wonderfully lush, vibrant cinematography.

Unquestionably, it deals with a deserving topic, and mostly does so impressively. In strict Hinduism, widows — some of them prepubescent — have traditionally been shunned, sent away to live in isolated communities, or ashrams. Mehta, through the eyes of eight-year-old widow Chuyia (newcomer Sarala), renders the lives of these women with great detail and compassion. That their destinies should be different is obvious; unfortunately, the film repeatedly relies on a male character to verbally sum up its message, effectively undercutting it with an unnecessary indulgence. (1.54)

Embarcadero. (Knapp)

ONGOING

American Dreamz This new satire offers more evidence that writer-director Paul Weitz might have a future beyond *American Pie* movies. It has so many right ideas and funny moments that one feels ungrateful to note that it shoulda been better. Weaving together two easy targets — reality TV shows and our current idiot presidency — the scenario has apple-cheeked, Ohio-bred Britney wannabe Sally (Mandy Moore) clawing her way onto Simon Cowell-alike Martin Tweed's (Hugh Grant) titular *American Idol*-like ratings sensation. Meanwhile, there's a White House crisis once dolittle puppet-Prez Staton (Dennis Quaid) decides to read the newspaper. (This is so atypical that when Chief of Staff Willem Dafoe spies the dis-

carded *New York Times* on the presidential bedroom floor, he asks, "New puppy?") The shocking realization that all is not at all well in the world — contradicting those "briefings" which hitherto kept him blissfully ignorant — sends Staton into several exclusive weeks of actual fact-gathering and no photo ops. Clearly, this must be stopped, lest democracy break out in the Oval Office. His handlers have the bright idea of relaunching a reneguted president into the public eye via a guest-judge shot on *American Dreamz*. Unfortunately, Middle Eastern terrorists then launch guileless, show-tune-loving Omer (Sam Golzar) as a so-bad-he's-great contestant ordered to blow up himself and the Leader of the Free World on air. Part *Network*, part *That's My Bush*, *Dreamz* is good fun, but never quite savage

enough. In the hands of Preston Sturges, or Trey Parker for that matter, this material might have approached genius. Almost getting there all by himself is Tony Yalda as Omer's Beverly Hills dis-queen cousin. (1.47) *Century 20*. (Harvey)

American Gun If you believe most critics and bloggers, Aric Avelino's debut film is *Crash* revisited, substituting gun violence for antiracist

sermonizing. While *American Gun* does employ multiple (though disconnected) story lines for a lofty central concept, Avelino displays a far steadier hand than self-congratulatory *Crash* writer-director Paul Haggis. That said, *American Gun* is no masterpiece; in noticeably avoiding heavy-handed-

CONTINUES ON PAGE 80 >

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CONTENTS

ness, the film sometimes obscures the relevance of and connection between its story lines. It's this very vagueness, however, that is also appealing. *Avelino* treats an aging gun shop owner (Donald Sutherland), for instance, with the same respect as the mother (Marcia Gay Harden) of a Columbine-like killer, as well as a precocious inner-city teen (Arlen Escapeta) who carries a handgun for protection. This is *Avelino*'s greatest achievement: Unlike Haggis, he actually likes his characters, treating them as more than mere pawns in a propagandistic game. This is a flawed but ambitious debut, one that recognizes that any sweeping generalizations about American violence would be self-defeating. If nothing else, the presence of Forest Whitaker — as an overworked high school

principal — is, as always, a cause for celebration.
(1:35) *Roxie*. (Knapp)

The Benchwarmers (1:20) *Century 20*

Dick Watch out, *Donnie Darko*, there's a new kid on the '80s-crazed, teen cult-movie block. Once you get past the somewhat off-putting and too-clever-by-half dialogue that flies off the mouths of the high school mools, gumshoes, and gangsters in writer-director Rian Johnson's debut feature, you can begin to unravel this noir's many mysterious pleasures, an undertaking that could easily take a minimum half-dozen viewings if you have, say, all the time in the world. At first color—impressed glance, I can report that Joseph Gordon-Levitt's Donnie is a handsome, earnest, soulful turn in *Mysterious Skin* and that his performance in this movie is sure to function as an A-list calling card much in the same way that playing a certain doomed budding bunmanmyan helped truly launch the career of Jake Gyllenhaal, I can help

that Zora Neheter isn't exactly Mary Astor in *The Maltese Falcon*, though the idea is a fine one. And I can definitely say that *Brick* gives Lukas Haas the type of fitting role in an excellent movie that he's been deserving but not receiving for close to two decades. Without a doubt, David Lynch is a huge influence on Johnson, who has that director's knack for creating heavy atmosphere — rooms that carry the memory of death — and for breaking up that unease with hilarious non sequiturs. (1:50) *Embarcadero, Shattuck* (Huston)

The Celestine Prophecy An out-of-the-blue lead from an old friend sends rudderless John (Matthew Settle) off to Peru in search of ancient scrolls rumored to reveal nine linked, universal life "insights." At each step in the journey he runs across significant allies and teachers, among them enigmatic Will (Thomas Kretschmann), linguist Julia (Annabeth Gish), love interest Marjorie (Sarah Wayne Callies), and Father Sanchez (Joaoim Almeida). But high church, political, and military authorities (notably Hector Elizondo and Jürgen Prochnow) want to destroy the manuscripts, which threaten their established power structures, and will stop at nothing to thwart true believers. Based on James Redfield's massively popular 1991

novel, which packaged introductory New Age metaphysics in easy-to-digest pulp thriller form the movie should please if not thrill established fans as a reasonably faithful, compact adaptation, directed in efficient if unimaginative fashion by TV movie veteran Armand Mastroianni. But if you're oblivious or outright hostile to talk of "energy fields" and "synchronicity" as secretly underlying all reality, do not pass Go. Or do, and enjoy what will no doubt strike you as a gaga pseudomystical campfest. In the tradition of most spiritually inspired recent movies (including the current niche-market Christian films), *Celestine* may hope to convert newbies, but its well-intended proselytizing will more likely spur unkind laughter from previously uncovered viewers. (1.56) *Lumiere, Shattuck* (Harvey)

» **Crossing Arizona** Reaching a local screen just as those bold "Minutemen" are once again bravely patrolling our border for any stray Messicans - and planning in particular to target the lifesaving water posts maintained by humanitarian bodies — Joseph Matthew's documentary targets perhaps one of the most dramatic aspects in Latin America's ongoing northward immigrant rush. Driven to the US by collapsed economies (often the

result of Yankee "free trade" policies), the émigrés glimpsed here aren't exactly the "drug dealers, rapists, and killers" feared by so many border-closure advocates: The vast majority have only very reluctantly left homes and families, hoping to better support them by working abroad. But while the security of their families, jobs, and property, together with the easier U.S. entry path, has recently forced more and more travelers to cross in locations that might tax even the best-prepared backpacker. Temperatures up to 120 degrees, exhaustion, arduous tramps through many miles of confusing desert terrain, sometimes misleading or abandoning "coyote" guides, et al., have led to well over 100 deaths in the past few years, according to the U.S. State Department. And that's just counting the bodies that are actually found. Input from immigrant activists, hysteria-fanning pundits and politicians, borderland residents, Border Patrol officers, Minutemen, and others offer an array of opinions in this engrossing film — some (on both sides) reasonable, some blinded by propaganda. But the bottom line, as one of the immigrants interviewed so truthfully by "Moby" deserves it: he is in the desert for a cup of water." (1:36) *Roxie*. (Harvey)

D The Devil and Daniel Johnston it would be a shame if Jeff Feuerzeig's new movie disappeared within the rock-doc genre, because both his approach and his subject are unique. Some pretty ridiculous claims are made regarding Daniel Johnston's songwriting talent — he's likened to Robert Johnson and compared favorably to Bob Dylan more than once — but you'd have to be utterly numb not to be affected by the blunt pain of Johnston's huge, unadorned, and unpolished songs. Johnston's off-wild performances of these songs, Soundtracked and animated in more ways than one by Johnston, this movie has links to Feuerzeig's equally excellent film-based doc about Half Japanese and could make up one-third of a traumatizing triple bill of recent Southern-insanity docs, along with *Tarnation* and *Be Here to Love Me: A Film about Townes Van Zandt*. The doc can spark arguments, and it makes you wonder why everyone but the still-very-much-alive Johnston is so into it. It's directed by Johnston's brother, and playful and then harrowing. **D** *The Devil and Daniel Johnston* is hard to shake. (1:50) *Opera Plaza*, *Smith Rafael* (Huston)

Duma Just when you thought the year of the wildlife documentary was over, with all those penguins and grizzly bears safely tucked into their DVD cases, along comes *Duma*, the sweet tale of boy who journeys across South Africa to return his pet cheetah to the wild. *Duma* isn't a doc (though it is based on a true story), but it's firmly in the kid-friendly tradition of director Carroll Ballard's previous films *The Black Stallion* and *Fly Away Home*. On a more wholesome planet, Ballard's style of animal filmmaking for young audiences would be prevail — not, as reality has it, the method that involves opiate CGI, the drool voice of Bill Murray, and the toys tucked into Happy Meals. Smaller tykes who're missing *Madagascar*-type shenanigans and song styling may be less than impressed, but older children (and their parents, as well as anyone without spawn who happens to enjoy a beautifully shot nature yarn) will have no trouble warming to *Duma*'s charms. (1.40) *Smith Rafael*. (Edwy)

Failure to Launch Tempting as it is to ridicule this clunky time en route to lampooning this clunkier film, it almost seems too easy, as if director Tom Dey and the honchos at Paramount were offering up bait to us grumpy critics. Say what you will about *Failure to Launch* — for example, that it's about as breezy as lead paint — but stars Matthew McConaughey and Sarah Jessica Parker have great teeth. As the regrettable slapstick gags, idiotic supporting characters, and plot contrivances pile up, I found myself entranced by the duo's unending barrage of smiles. There's promise in *Failure to Launch*'s premise — that the world's sexiest man still lives with his parents and needs to be “launched” by *Sex and the City*'s scrubs — but in the end, the only pleasure to be found comes courtesy of those poorly whites. (1.3/7) *1000 Van Ness, Four Star* (Goldberg)

Find Me Guilty Whether cops, crooks, or something in between, Sidney Lumet's more memorable protagonists (*Serpico*, *Prince of the City*, *The Verdict*, etc.) invariably see headed toward the courtroom. In this limber effort, the 82-year-old director's central figure goes almost nowhere else. He's Giacomo "Fat Jack" Dilmorsio (Vin Diesel, outfitted with prosthetic hair and Bruce Willis's hair weave), who, while already in prison, found himself tried alongside 20 fellow Lucchese family "goodfellas" on 76 counts of, ahem, off-grid capitalism. The notorious late 1980s trial dragged on for nearly two years, much of its circus entertainment value derived from Jackie D's decision to defend himself, sixth-grade education and all. "I'm not a gangster, ladies and gentlemen; I'm a gaa-

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ster," he ka-boom-cha'd. "All this, and we gotta contend with fuckin' Shekky Greene," one unamused fellow plaintiff opines. If all this didn't actually happen (the screenplay is largely based on court records), you'd think it was a really far-fetched riff off the old *My Cousin Vinny* goes Soprano block. Lument's best film in eons is entertaining. Diesel's good behavior goes some distance toward erasing many recent cinematic crimes. A subdued Ron Silver is excellent, on-fire Annabella Sciorra ditto, and Peter Dinklage almost gets away with playing Morgan Freeman. (You know, the dignified, minority-cast, utterly gratuitous part that exists solely to flatter the star.) Just one thing bothers me: This is a little-guy-triumphs tale whose little (wise) guys evidently kill, steal, peddle, and intimidate a living (from lawful society) — a truth soft-pedaled so *Gaity* can be the jokey, jokey, everyman-sentimental ("Family — that's all that matters"), feel-good flick it is. Gag. (2:04) *Four Stars*. (Harvey)

★ Friends with Money Fans of Nicole

Holofener's lively witty takes on relationships between women (*Drively and Amazing*, *Walking and Talking*) will not be disappointed by *Friends with Money* — and nor will uninitiated filmgoers drawn into the writer-director's bittersweet world by Jennifer Aniston's star billing here. In a low-key turn that recalls her much praised work in *The Good Girl*, Aniston plays one of four LA friends, a housekeeper who's recently dumped her teaching career, she's the token gal without money or a hubby. The rest of the group includes Joan Cusack (superchic and happily married); Catherine Keener (seminch and on the road to divorce); and Frances McDormand (rich, angry at the world, and married to a guy that everyone else suspects is gay).

McDormand is the acidic standout among the friends — never before has the "aschole cough" been so beautifully executed — but the performances are strong overall, backed by the film's spot-on observations about contemporary women's lives. Well-placed real-life references (SpongeBob, Old Navy) and situations (road rage, sample sales) make the characters seem that much more relatable and honest. (1:28) *Albany*, *Embarcadero*, *Empire*, *Grinda*, *Piedmont*. (Eddy)

I Am a Sex Addict Maybe it's a strange coincidence — or just the result of shared John Cassavetes and Woody Allen love — that Caveh Zahedi's 1991 directorial feature debut *A Little Strife* bears more than a little resemblance (black-and-white film stock, nerd rock milieu) to *Mutual Appreciation*, the latest movie by current indie film wonder boy Andrew "Funny Ha Ha" Bujalski. Zahedi's latest movie is often perceptive in ways that most comparatively dishonest movies aren't, but the garish shot-on-video look isn't always a step forward for the director, even if he gets some funny effects out of repeating visuals to reflect the main character's compulsions. That main character is Zahedi himself, and the movie essentially lives and dies according to how much you like (or like to dislike) him and his plentiful mannerisms. He's endearing, but one can't help but wish that a bit more of his initial understatement was present. (1:38) *Balboa*. (Huston)

Ice Age: The Meltdown The first Ice Age's three main characters — Manny the woolly mammoth (Ray Romano), Sid the sloth (John Leguizamo), and Diego the saber-toothed tiger (Denis Leary) — return to piece together a slight script for the sake of CGI timeliness. When melting ice threatens the valley they call home, the trio journey toward safety. Along the way they meet a pair of particularly obnoxious possums, Crash (Seann William Scott) and Eddie (Josh Peck) and their "sister" Ellie (Queen Latifah), an orphaned woolly mammoth suffering from an identity crisis. Manny and Ellie tip-toe toward romance while their friends bicker, get into trouble, and learn important life lessons. Meanwhile, a demented squirrel tries in vain to obtain an acorn, repeatedly providing the movie with its funniest, if only incongruent, moments. The kids will surely eat this stuff up, but for the rest of us, there's a lot of time spent wishing the damn ice would just melt already. (1:30) *1000 Van Ness*, *Century 20*, *Century Plaza*. (Knapp)

Inside Man Inside *Man*'s place atop the box office its opening weekend was no fluke: This is Spike Lee's most playful film in recent memory. Beginning with Clive Owen, unshaven and wild-eyed, addressing the camera with talk of the "perfect robbery," the film at first seems like standard heist fare. Though the story grows increasingly intricate, it's not turns of plot that Lee revels in but turns of phrase. In Denzel Washington, Lee rediscovered his consummate leading man. As Detective Keith Frazier, Washington struts through his scenes — at once tough, debonair, and sarcastic. However, he's always at the mercy of bank heist mastermind Dalton Russell (Owen). Russell stages an elaborate robbery on Wall Street, calmly controlling the cops from behind sunglasses and a

white kerchief. Masked for most of the film, Owen nonetheless dominates it with his emotionless, but penetrating, voice. The film is equally fruitful for its supporting cast, particularly Jodie Foster. If this sort of crowd-pleaser allows Lee to indulge in pet projects, here's to pandering. (1:37) *1000 Van Ness*, *Century 20*, *Four Star*, *Grand Lake*, *Presidio*, *Shattuck*. (Knapp)

Kinky Boots "The sex is in the heel!" Lola (*Dirty Pretty Things*' Chivette Ejofor) asserts with a throaty purr in this boots-to-brogues tale from the UK. A brassy, burned-out drag-cabaret singer, Lola works the London stage to keep herself in the requisite four-inch stilettos. But when Northampton shoe factory owner Charlie Price (Joel Edgerton) accidentally finds himself on the wrong end of her swinging handbag, she's yanked wig-first into a world of door, small-town factory workers and their boring, sensible shoes. It seems the Price factory is badly in the red, so, with the help of Lola's design expertise, Charlie cooks up a desperate plan to market unbearably high-heeled footwear to London's ample drag contingent.

Based on a true story, *Kinky Boots* falls squarely in the vein of all those working-class, bootstrapping English dramedies of recent years (perhaps taking bootstrapping to new levels of literalness). While the film as a whole may not aspire to much beyond a workmanlike level of solid craftsmanship, the mesmerizing Ejofor supplies it with the necessary equal parts red vinyl flash and fabulous, Dietrich-worthy pathos. Forget Sienna Miller and that upcoming *Edie Sedgwick* biopic — this factory girl can punch a time card like nobody's business. (1:46) *Lumiere*, *Shattuck*. (Devereaux)

Lucky Number Sleev The official spin on Sundance this year was that it was a "return" to what the festival was "really about," meaning no star-laden mainstream commercial features. Though as leaky as any sweeping generalization covering 100 films or so, that thesis held some water so long as you didn't notice *Lucky Number Sleev*, a 10-years-too-late exercise in wannabe Tarantino-hood starring such debatable indie mavericks as Bruce Willis, Josh Harnett, Morgan Freeman, Sir Ben Kingsley, and Lucy Liu. Sleev (Harnett) is a guy who's ever snarky in the face of danger — this is explained as due to a "medical condition" that blocks fear — staying at a friend's apartment. He's unfortunately mistaken for that friend by thugs who say he owes them \$96,000. Thus Sleev gets in the middle of warring mob bosses Freeman and Kingsley; wise-cracking hit man Willis also falls across his path, next-door neighbor Lu falls into his bed, and the 25-year-old murder of an entire family falls into place as the piece anyone with half a brain can guess solves the film's heist-and-conspiracy "puzzle." The last time a joke quassinor felt this imitative, it was *Kiss Kiss Bang Bang*, which actually was clever at times. Written by 28-year-old Jason Smilovic, Sleev's dialogue is more rotten-egg than hard-boiled, with references to "darkies and skullsaps" (i.e. blacks and Hasidic Jews) played as jauntily non-PC, while a sole gay character is exclusively called "the fairy" — until he's killed, of course. With its witless, smirky tone, gimmicky camera work, trying-too-hard production design, clock-punching performances, and shameless final turn toward the maudlin, this is a stink bomb crafted entirely of plastic. Note to director Paul McGuigan, who made a near great movie once (*Gangster #1*): You can do better. (1:50) *1000 Van Ness*, *Century 20*, *Shattuck*. (Harvey)

Marilyn Hotchkiss's Ballroom Dancing and Charm School Trying to honor the last wishes of a dying stranger (John Goodman, whose death scene lasts longer than those in grand opera), grieving widow Robert Carlyle enrolls in a ballroom-dance class filled with other wuvvuable wosers, broken hearts, and hilarious misfits. In a fashion so formulaic you can practically hear a metronome ticking past each cliché en route, he eventually learns to laugh loudly and live again. If your grammar is both really easily pleased and highly conservative of taste, your good deed for the month can be taking her to this mind-numbingly cutesy, mawkish, and derivative ripoff of *The Full Monty* (how embarrassing for Carlyle that he's now starred in both excellent original and plastic imitation), *Shall We Dance?*, et al. But you must be prepared to suffer — for anyone with even a half-functioning bullshit detector, these 103 minutes will pass like a purgatorial eternity. As the school's instructor, Mary Steenbergen gives an eccentrically mannered performance that provides the only nonprefab entertainment value here. On the other hand, Marisa Tomei, Donnie Wahlberg, Sean Astin, and Sonia Braga — in the latter reduced to playing a caricatured aging Latin bombshell — even Carmen Miranda might've thought beneath her dignity. Must be relieved now, having gotten their personal-all-worst performances out of the way. (1:43) *Opera Plaza*. (Harvey)

Mountain Patrol: Kekexili This impressive physical adventure, filmed under conditions nearly as arduous as those depicted, is based on events that transpired in the early '90s. Volunteering without pay to stop poachers who'd reduced the Tibetan antelope populace to near extinction, a hardy group of armed patrolmen travel the vast, forbidding tundra of its remote habitat. A journalist (Zhang Lei) joins the men led by tough-as-nails Ritai (Doubujie), trying to out-stone-face Charles Bronson) just as they've discovered a comrade shot to death on his watch. They then take off on an increasingly perilous mission to find the killer — and the syndicate-boss who's kept this illegal animal-pelt trade alive. As if the threat of further man-made violence isn't enough, hypothermia, starvation, quicksand, and other dangers further stack odds against survival for both pursuers and pursued. You'll see more rotting carcasses than living antelope in *The Missing Gun*, director Lu Chuan's latest film, which feels a tad oververged for crossover appeal as a brutal Western-style action movie. While boredom and profound isolation must've been major elements in these patrolmen's experience, *Kekexili* offers nonstop crisis upon crisis, with more people running and waving guns than you'd find in the average urban crime thriller. That can get a little overbearing, but the wide-screen majesty of the seldom-seen wilderness locations more than compensates. (1:29) *Balboa*, *Opera Plaza*, *Shattuck*. (Harvey)

La Mujer de Mi Hermano Beautiful, bored, and sexually ignored by square husband Ignacio (Christian Meier), Zoe (Barbara Mori) leaps into bed with Ignacio's free-spirited brother, Gonzalo (Manolo Cardona). Shaggy-haired, bearded, and artistic, Gonzalo is oh so bohemian and virile, a welcome respite from the overworked Ignacio, who — given the fact that he and Zoe cannot have children — insists on having sex only on Saturdays. But Gonzalo is an asshole, a fact the audience learns early, leaving Zoe's eventual discovery of this without any dramatic impact. Instead, the supposed power of the movie lies in the mystery of Ignacio: How could this man not want to have sex constantly with a wife so beautiful? Is he merely too busy getting his back waxed, or is there a big secret floating around in that impeccably groomed head of his? As you might guess, the answer — like this Mexican drama — is painfully obvious. (1:33) *1000 Van Ness*, *Century Plaza*. (Knapp)

The Notorious Bettie Page Bettie Page's image is unmistakable. Fifty years after the height of her modeling career — which included both cheesecake and racy-for-the-time bondage poses — she remains an icon for glamorous rebels. But as the often confused spelling of her name suggests (for the record, it's "Bettie," but she's often credited in her films as "Betty"), Page had two sides: the saucy temptress captured by the cameras, but also a wholesome girl devoted to Jesus and — though intelligent — possessed of a gee-whiz spirit that allowed her to endure with breezy nonchalance, say, being tied up and ball-gagged. *The Notorious Bettie Page*, directed with unconventional biopic style by Mary Harron (*American Psycho*), seizes upon this duality, tracing Page's pinup reign by pointedly switching between black-and-white and color film. The movie begins at the anti-smut Senate hearings that encouraged Page (an enthusiastic Gretchen Mol) to leave show-biz, then backtracks to fill in crucial moments of her Southern girlhood (to sum up: Men are dogs). The most energetic moments remake Page's most famous photo sessions, from seamy snaps for brother-and-sister team living (Chris Bauer) and Paula Klav (Lili Taylor) to jungle-themed frolics for Bunny Yeager (Sarah Paulson). The real Page, now in her 80s, has avoided the spotlight since the late 1950s, postmodeling, she navigated a troubled patch that included a stint in a mental hospital. *Bettie Page* doesn't touch on these years, instead ending as Page cements her relationship with God (while remaining ever proud of her exhibitionist spirit). Without her participation, the film doesn't really fill in any of Page's emotional blanks; the end result, while entertaining, tends to favor re-creation over insight. (1:40) *Clay*, *Shattuck*. (Eddy)

Roving Mars Thanks to the combined efforts of, oddly, NASA, Walt Disney, and defense monolith Lockheed Martin, you can see the red planet up close and personal for the first time in IMAX super size. Except that is, that for the most part, you can't. Despite our best scientific efforts and millions of dollars, it seems that the only way we can get a close-up look at our nearest planetary neighbor, sadly, is still through CGI. *Roving Mars* starts off promising, tracking the buildup to the breakthrough mission that sent two robots to the Martian surface. But at the touchdown, just when it should be getting good, the film becomes a special effects minefield. The real Mars images are given short shrift — with still photos shown only

briefly — in favor of sexier, slick, glossy, hypercolorized CG recreations (think *Nova* on steroids). It's too bad, because though often gritty and black and white, the pictures of the rocky, barren landscape are spectacular in their true otherworldliness and don't need the cosmetic surgery makeover. (1:40) *Metreon IMAX*. (Crawford)

Scary Movie 4 The latest David Zucker parodyfest makes next-door neighbors out of *War of the Worlds* and *The Grudge*; it also pokes fun at *The Village*, *Saw*, *Million Dollar Baby*, and *Breakback Mountain*. Most important, it takes mad jabs at Tom Cruise (effectively parodied here by Craig Bierko). If screen time in a *Scary Movie* film can measure one's status as a cultural punching bag, Cruise has Jacko beat several times over — along with a certain *South Park* episode, *Scary Movie 4*'s complete deconstruction of you-know-which *Opel* appearance makes the circle of mockery complete (at least until the real Cruise pulls more crazy shit — he does have yet another huge movie on the horizon, so his grinning man ain't leaving the media glare anytime soon). As usual, series vet Anna Faris plays the ditzy with elan; the film's rapid-fire cameos include Lil' John, Dr. Phil, and Chris Elliott. Plus, Leslie Nielsen plays a US prez who'd rather listen to a children's story than deal with a national crisis. Oh, yes they did! (1:23) *1000 Van Ness*, *Century 20*, *Century Plaza*. (Eddy)

The Sentinel Offering as much surprise and substance as a State of the Union address, *The Sentinel* strives to elicit the same rah-rah response, without the inevitable public backlash. Though detailing a presidential assassination plot, it avoids politics — painting the president (David Rasche) as a benign figure whose most controversial statement is that the US should sign the Kyoto Treaty. The movie instead focuses on the Secret Service: After veteran agent Pete Garrison (Michael Douglas) learns the assassination plot hinges upon a mole within the service, he realizes he's the fall guy. Blackmailed with photographs of his secret affair with the first lady (Kim Basinger), Garrison goes underground to find the traitor and evade his estranged protégé, agent David Beckrindge (Kiefer Sutherland), and his rookie partner, Jill Maren (Eva Longoria). Though predictable and slight (Sutherland's in 24 mode, Longoria does little besides fill out her suit), *The Sentinel* works for what it is: an unremarkable Douglas vehicle that's hard to dislike. (1:45) *1000 Van Ness*, *Century 20*, *Century Plaza*, *Grand Lake*, *Oaks*. (Knapp)

Silent Hit Rose (Radha Mitchell) takes daughter Shanon (Jodelle Ferland) to a West Virginia ghost

town — empty since a catastrophic, still smoldering coal fire broke out three decades prior — in the hopes of finding some answer to the adopted child's sleepwalking nightmares. Unfortunately, they arrive with a car-crash bang, and upon waking Rose finds Shanon missing. Worse, periodic emergency sirens announce reality shifts that turn the eerie town into a subterranean world of Boschian grotesques, devouring cockroaches, and one nasty demon called Pyramid Head. This adaptation of the famously atmospheric and scary Konami game series works pretty well for about half its length — director Christophe Gans (*Brotherhood of the Wolf*) and his collaborators do a tremendous job re-creating and elaborating on the game's distinctive designs. Then things deteriorate as pure horror surrealism story takes a backseat to the routine story line that gradually comes to focus; scares decrease and scattered unintentional laughs (mostly from scenarist Roger Avary) increase with the two-hour-plus runtime. Disappointing, but still worth a look if you're a fan of the games, or eager for some screen horror ambitious enough to at least break from slasher formulas. (2:07) *1000 Van Ness*, *Century 20*, *Century Plaza*. (Harvey)

Take the Lead The sooner you accept *Take the Lead* as a cheesy high school dance movie, the sooner you'll realize it's everything a cheesy high school dance movie should be: a wildly veering hodgepodge of gritty realism, cliché, and shameless fantasy, wrapped in a package of kick-ass dance. Loosely based on the life of Pierre Dulaine, the man who founded the New York City after-school ballroom program profiled in *Mad Hot Ballroom*, *Take the Lead* moves the story from elementary to high school and tricks it out with a mother lode of hip-hop. Antonio Banderas turns on the suave and is convincing as a ballroom dance instructor who tackles a detention class at a rough inner-city school, prepping the students for a city-wide competition with a cash prize. Of course it's not about the money, or even the dancing — the fox trot can't compete cinematically with the kids' free-form hip-hop moves — but discipline and respect. The film's cliché teacher-student moments are balanced by story lines involving the kids (finally, an authentic-feeling group of multicultural high schoolers onscreen); music video veteran Liz Friedlander directs with a killer sense of rhythm. (1:48) *1000 Van Ness*, *Century 20*, *Century Plaza*, *Shattuck*. (Koh)

Thank You for Smoking Outfitted with a name that sounds shiny and desirable, Nick Naylor CONTINUES ON PAGE 82 >

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ONGOING CONT

(Aaron Eckhart) is in the business of eating shit with a smile, then pretending that aforementioned shit is, in fact, a brand-new renewable energy source! Such jaw-dropping insincerity is a must when you've got his job: chief national public-relations shill for the tobacco industry. There's no putting a good face on the promotion and sales of "cancer sticks" anymore, is there? Nick is a genius at suggesting otherwise, or at least at weaving such tangles of faux folksy, quasi-inspirational "logic" that his many foes are left confusedly tongue-tied. In private moments he's still ruthless, pragmatic, self-justifying, cynical — yet an everyman nonetheless, trying in his own way to be a good citizen, even a good dad. On his custody days, he inculcates his son Joey (Cameron Bright) with life wisdom while seldom evoking the Golden Rule. Kidnap attempts, death threats, crusading congressmen (William H. Macy), duplicitous investigative journalists (Kate Holmes), living reanimations like a near-dead former Marlboro Man (Sam Elliott), cold, hard statistics — nothing fazes Nick. A political movie in that it's about culture-of-spin morality — in which the highest value is placed on the most you can get away with for the sake of the bottom line — Jason Reitman's film from Christopher Buckley's novel gives good satire. It's awfully clever, colorful, and well cast; Eckhart hasn't been so perfect since he slithered through *In the Company of Men*. Yet once the moderate dazzle lifts, you might realize that exposing and/or making fun of Big Tobacco is like shooting, er, smoked fish in a barrel. (1.32) California, Century 20, Embarcadero, Empire, Orinda, Piedmont. (Harvey)

22 **Tibet: A Buddhist Trilogy** Originally released in 1979, this spiritually epic documentary has been digitally restored and recut into three discrete sections, each highlighting a different aspect of the lives and work of exiled Tibetan Buddhist monks. Director Graham Coleman claims to have been inspired by Robert Flaherty, and certainly *Tibet* is about as vérité as it gets — at times frustratingly

so (it would have been nice to include some investigation into why nuns are suspiciously absent from all ceremony, in contradiction to a voice-over that suggests that both monks and nuns are the most revered members of Tibetan society). But the sheer power of sound and image is truly moving, especially during the climactic funeral sequence, where a body is cremated in an open-air fire as its spirit is guided through the interim stages between life and reincarnation ("Know that you are dead, but be not worried"). Most surprising is just how raucous Tibetan monks can get. More rowdy existential philosophers than obedient servants, it's safe to assume they won't be taking vows of silence any time soon. And thank Buddha for that. (2.14) Smith Rafael. (Devereaux)

Transamerica Good things do happen to (some) actors who wait. Felicity Huffman's work in *Desperate Housewives* caused instant celebrity. Her new status no doubt fanned critical-buzz flames around her very solid if unspectacular performance in this fairly solid but decidedly unspectacular indie drama. She plays Bree, formerly Stanley, Osbourne, a pre-op MTF transsexual who's dowdily Manan the Librarian rather than sexily superferme. On the brink of final surgery, the LA transplant is improbably told by therapist Elizabeth Peña she won't be truly "ready" unless she deals with one remnant of masculine life unknown until just now: Teenage son Toby (Kevin Zegers). Arrested as a prostitute in NYC, he's somehow tracked down Bree as a bail source, unaware that, well, she's his father. They wind up making a coast-to-coast "transformative journey" that's uneven and anecdotal and funny-sad in fairly pat ways. The movie's earnestness reels off balance in the third act, when its protagonists meet the conservative-Christian parents Bree is estranged from — with Fionnula Flanagan caricaturing the gorgon mother. While Huffman is fine in a role that (especially as cast with a woman) can't help but scream "award bait," *Air Bud* franchise survivor Zegers is equally impressive. Together they anchor a film that, as written and directed by Duncan Tucker, is pleasant and well-intentioned but somewhat pedestrian. (1.43) Opera Plaza. (Harvey)

Tsotsi There was a time when foreign cinema implied risk and genuine difference, but the mid-debrow pull of indie behemoths like *Miramax* increasingly means the subtitled films that receive theatrical distribution are every bit as conventionally sentimental as their American counterparts. Oscar, of course, couldn't be happier: Films with as much heart as *Tsotsi* will always find favor with the Academy's voters. South African writer-director Gavin Hood here streamlines the *City of God* formula into a more standard-issue redemption narrative. On the run from a brawl, the title character hijacks a rich woman's car only to later discover her baby is in the backseat. Without a plan, hardened *Tsotsi* (played with nervous calm by Presley Chweneyagwa) reluctantly begins to care for the child and reconnect with his own lost innocence. As that sounds contrived, let's just say Hood isn't above picturing a dog whining to its pathetic, violent death (in a flashback, no less) by way of characterizing *Tsotsi*. Subtlety, it would seem, is not the filmmaker's strong suit. Still, even if it does seem prepackaged for Oscar audiences, much of the cinematography is ravishing in its burnished, dusty detail — hardly enough to make *Tsotsi* the year's best foreign film but enough, perhaps, for a saving grace. (1.34) Albany, Opera Plaza, Piedmont. (Goldberg)

22 **V for Vendetta** Nerds, celebrate: The Alan Moore adaptation you've been dying for has finally arrived (begone, celluloid travesties! From *Hell* and *The League of Extraordinary Gentlemen*). Produced by the Wachowskis' Brothers and directed by James McTeigue, *V for Vendetta*'s least shocking scene is the one where star-waif Natalie Portman is shorn to the skull. More startling is the film's antigovernment, pro-terrorist message, conveyed through a masked British revolutionary (Hugo Weaving) who's part anarchist, part Phantom of the Opera. Why the television ads show the film's climactic scene — Big Ben go boom — is a little mystifying, but there's still enough antifascist propaganda and the haircuts and explosions to make *V for Vendetta* the most thoughtful action movie in recent memory — not to mention the most relevant, especially considering the source material was penned in the 1980s. Paranoid governments controlling the media, censoring artists, torturing prisoners, discriminating against gays and lesbians, and ruling with force and scare tactics? Neh, doesn't ring a bell. (2.10) 1000 Van Ness, Century 20, Four Star. (Eddy)

The Wild Thing populated by some amusing characters (particularly Eddie Izzard as grumpy koala Nigel), *The Wild* suffers from a fatal flaw: Its central figures, father and son lions Sampson (Kiefer Sutherland) and Ryan (Greg Gipe), are a dreadful bore. After hearing fabricated stories about his father's dramatic days in the wild, Ryan dreams of escaping the Central Park zoo. He accidentally gets trapped in a trailer bound for Africa, prompting Sampson and a band of misfit animals, including Nigel and Sampson's best friend, Benny (Jim Belushi), a squirrel, to search for him. They brave the streets and sewers of Manhattan and then the African jungle, stumbling into crazy adventures along the way. Izzard does his best to keep things fun, briefly getting help from William Shatner as a wildebeest king as mad about power as he is about dance choreography. But they can only do so much; the movie — like Sampson and his stories — has little beneath its showy exterior. (1.34) 1000 Van Ness, Century 20, Century Plaza. (Knapp)

The World's Fastest Indian Though Anthony Hopkins' pock-marked face would have cinched him a recurring role in the Westerns of yesteryear, the "Indian" in this film's title refers to a motorcycle: a gnarly, low-to-the-ground beast that was already outmoded 40 years ago. Mechanical limitations aside, Hopkins' character, Butch Munro, is a devotee of the model, having doctored up his bike with a lifetime of sweat and tool-shed ingenuity. A New Zealander to the core, Munro travels across the world to the sheer Bonneville Salt Flats in Utah late in his life to attempt a land-speed record on his shoestring Indian. *The World's Fastest Indian*, written and directed by Roger Donaldson, delivers this trek earnestly, with the kindness of strangers and weeping of tears around each new bend. It's a sports movie high on the heartwarming quality of its subject and, as such, plays more like a Hallmark card than a thrilling motorcycle ride. (2.06) Smith Rafael. (Goldberg)

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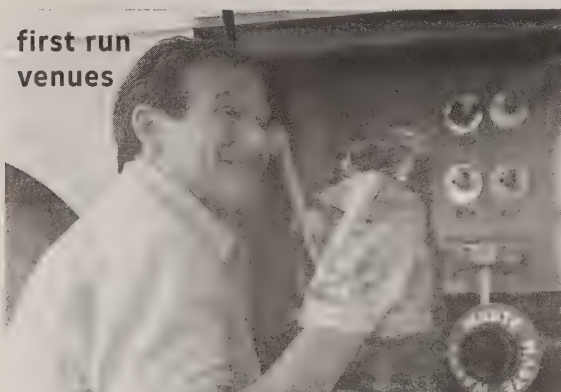
22 **Jericho's Echo: Punk Rock in the Holy Land** San Francisco filmmaker Liz Nord (*Dear Mr. Bush*) opens a fascinating window on the tight-knit Israeli punk scene with her energetic new documentary. At first glance, the live shows in *Jericho's Echo: Punk Rock in the Holy Land* could be any-



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Robin Williams stars in Columbia Pictures' family-adventure comedy *RV*. | PHOTO BY JOE LEDERER

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Clay Fillmore/Clay. 267-4893, 777-FILM, #096.
Embarcadero Center Cinema 1 Embarcadero Center, promenade level. 267-4893, 777-FILM, #154.
Empire West Portal/Vicente. 661-2539.
Four Star Clement/23rd Ave. 666-3488.

Kabuki 8 Post/Fillmore. 931-9800.
Lumiere California/Polk. 267-4893, 777-FILM, #097.
Metreon Fourth St/Mission. 1-800-FANDANGO #705.
Metro Union/Webster. 931-1685.
Opera Plaza Van Ness/Golden Gate. 267-4893, 777-FILM, #028.
Presidio 2340 Chestnut. 776-2388.
Stonestown 19th Ave/Winston. 221-8182.
Vogue Sacramento/Presidio. 221-8183.

OAKLAND

Grand Lake 3200 Grand, Oakl. (510) 452-3556.
Jack London Stadium 100 Washington, Jack London Square, Oakl. (510) 433-1320.
Parkway 1834 Park, Oakl. (510) 814-2400.
Piedmont Piedmont/41st St, Oakl. (510) 843-3456, 777-FILM, #020.

BERKELEY AREA

Act I and II Center/Shattuck, Berk. (510) 843-

3456, 777-FILM, #012.

Albany 1115 Solano, Albany. (510) 843-3456, 777-FILM, #013.

AMC Bay Street 16 5614 Shellmound, Emeryville. (510) 457-4262.

California Kittredge/Shattuck, Berk. (510) 843-3456, 777-FILM, #015.

Elmwood 2966 College, Berk. (510) 649-0530.

Emery Bay 6330 Christie, Emeryville. (510) 420-0107.

Oaks 1875 Solano, Berk. (510) 526-1836.

Orinda 4 Drinda Theater Square, Orinda. (510) 254-9060.

Shattuck Cinemas 2230 Shattuck, Berk. (510) 843-3456, 777-FILM, #024.

UA Berkeley 2274 Shattuck, Berk. (510) 843-1487. **SFBG**

place in the United States, with excited audiences jumping around to three-minute anthems. Listen closer, though, and the lyrics, be they in English or Hebrew, reflect anxiety about living in the conflicted Israel-Palestine region, a place where Israeli teens face mandatory military service. Nord's subjects — an articulate, friendly (if occasionally menacing-looking) bunch — are wildly diverse; there are younger, more idealistic left-leaning who plan to plead insanity to get out of their army duties, as well as an older, right-wing contingent who have already served their time and, having seen friends die in front of them, are hardened by their experiences. One group wistfully recall their late lead singer, killed in a bus bombing, while another rocker seems jaded by the violence: "You get used to it. It just happens so often." Nord's interviews reveal a community bound together not just by an adventurous fashion sense but also by a remarkable open-mindedness and desire for peace with Palestine. The subculture's further nuances are revealed by Nord's excellent choice of side stories — chatting with the few women in the scene, as well as shadowing one spiky-haired kid's uneasy truce with his deeply religious brother — and her inclusion of remarkable, impossible-to-imagine-here details, including one band whose members serve in the army all week, then rush home to play gigs on the weekends. (1:15) *Red Vic* (Eddy)

Missing in America Years after his traumatic Vietnam service, Jake (Danny Glover) has devised a post-traumatic coping strategy that suits him just fine: living in an isolated Pacific Northwest cabin that lacks indoor plumbing but enables an existence virtually free of human contact. His closest neighbors are the homeless vets who camp out in the woods surrounding his property. First-time feature director Gabrielle Savage Dockerman (working from a story by Vietnam vet Ken Miller) draws a nuanced performance from Glover in this true, life-based tale that occasionally resembles *The Spitfire Grill*. However, *Missing in America* also features an unfortunate "and a child's love shall set you free" component, made even more heavy-handed by toe-curling kid actor Zoe Weizenbaum. The film closes out this year's San Francisco Women's Film Festival; visit www.sffwf.com for a complete schedule. (1:42) 111 Minna Gallery. (Eddy)

Movie on the Patio Night See Picks, page 26. **El Rio**.

Rene and Irene and I appears to introduce little to the packed genre of Holocaust documentaries. But Rene and Irene (the "I" of the title) have a particularly unique story. According to the film, of 3,000 twins who entered Auschwitz at the war's beginning, only 160 remained on Liberation Day in 1945; Rene and Irene were two. Being a twin was both a blessing and a curse: Josef Mengele, the infamous doctor responsible for the most horrific Nazi medical experiments, saw twins as a means to genetically engineer the Aryan race and, therefore, kept them alive. However, this led to unimaginable experiments that, years later, put Irene in a wheelchair with multiple sclerosis. Following liberation, Rene and Irene bounced around Europe before being reunited in New York in 1950. Now successful, active, and activist American citizens, their tale is a painful, fascinating, and fortuitous one that this unadventurous documentary doesn't quite live up to. Nonetheless, it's a history worth hearing. (1:13) *Yerba Buena Center for the Arts*. (Knapp)

Stanley Kubrick Series See pick box.

Stranded in Canton See Picks, page 26. (1:16) *Yerba Buena Center for the Arts*. **SFBG**

GUARDIAN

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MAY 5

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Can't make it to the store? Send JPG or GIF of an owl with your name and mailing address to promos@sfbg.com (subject line must read HOOT PROMO) by 2pm, Wednesday, April 26th and you'll be entered to win a screening pass.

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 Pleasant Hill - Century 16 Pleasant Hill
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 San Ramon - Regal Crow Canyon Stadium 6
 Union City - Century 25 Union City (FROD)
 Walnut Creek - Century 14 Downtown Walnut Creek (FROD)
PENINSULA
 Redwood City - Century Plaza 12
 San Mateo - Century 12 Downtown (FROD)
SAN JOSE
 St. Francisco - Century Plaza 10
 Hollister - Promer Cinema
 Milpitas - Century 20 Great Mall (FROD)
 Mountain View - Century Cinemas 16
 San Jose - Camera 12
 San Jose - Century 20 Del Norte (FROD)
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 Novato - Century Rowland Plaza
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Sat, 7:30. **SFBG**

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 THE NEW YORK TIMES
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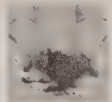
CAST:
 PENINSULA: PENINSULA, LANDMARK THEATRES PALO ALTO AQUINAS
 SAN JOSE: SAN JOSE, CAMERA CINEMAS CAMERO 12 CINEMA
 SAN JOSE, CENTURY THEATRES CENTURY 25

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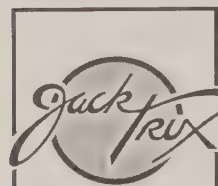


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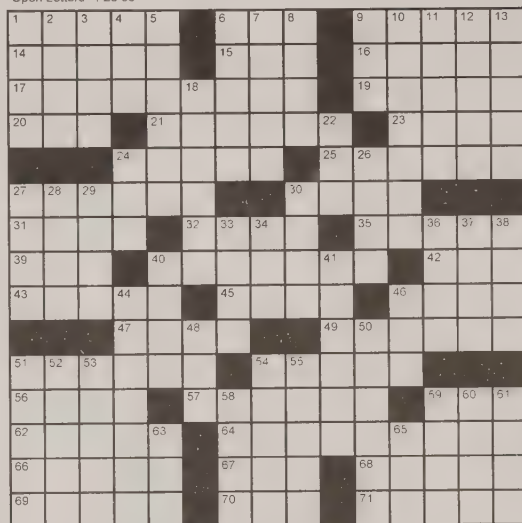
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Open Letters 4 26 06



Across

1. Fuji setting
6. Econ. yardstick
9. Schnapps variety
14. Plain people
15. Kia sedan
16. Hercules victim
17. Ends of the line?
19. Object
20. Love bug?
21. Used a hammock, perhaps
23. Wait
24. Warm and inviting
25. Is histrionic
27. Small fry
30. Bob Loblaw portrayer on "Arrested Development"
31. Warrior's target
32. She's low
35. Women's hybrid garment
39. Noted convenience store owner
40. Former couple's potty dealings?
42. Knock, slangily
43. Doled (out)
45. Socks apples
46. High school tag
47. Whipping result
49. Jeweled headwear
51. MUNI units
54. Poem of lament
56. Fall birthstone
57. Outsider musician Johnstone
59. DVD forerunner
62. Scooter brand
64. Twinnings-themed crib decoration?
66. Detective Dick
67. Bruins legend
68. Philosopher William of
69. Vampire hunter's need
70. Refusals
71. They got their start underground

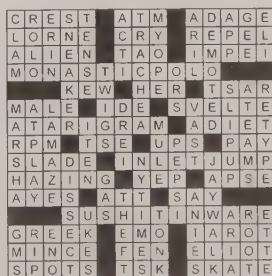
Down

1. Web help pgs.
2. Blue material
3. Knotted up
4. Buckeyes' sch.
5. Young superstar
6. Boef
7. Chilly
8. Struck thing
9. High degree
10. Optometry reference?
11. Own up
12. Like some oil or humor

13. Fast game

18. o.b. rival
22. Goddess: Lat.
24. In
26. Be wide
27. Phony
28. Whence Clinton
29. Druh
30. Flop on stage
33. Queer community mits.
34. Eastern ideal
36. Skunk's defense
37. Costa
38. Scolding sounds
40. First place?
41. Prize
44. Shepherd's protection?
46. Loud bird
48. Take it for a trip
50. Arctic homes
51. Legal wrongs
52. Visual illusion genre
53. Popular peer-to-peer service
54. Calendario page
55. Inventors, of a sort
58. Scores
59. "DOs and DON'Ts" magazine
60. Dressed
61. Radiation units
63. Grain in some bourbon
65. Letters prior to AD

Last week's solution



*Call (330) 328-3264 for free hints to this week's puzzle

double team psychic dream

APR. 26-MAY 2

ARIES

March 21-April 19

Making decisions is strictly off-limits, Aries, unless you're the rare ram that has a solid grip on your best-case scenario, or really, really, truly, deeply knows what you're trying to get out of the deal. As for the rest of you common folk, make no selections, and filter the resulting frustration through love.

TAURUS

April 20-May 20

Taurus, you've been dealt a bad hand. No doubt about it, pal — shit is rough for you people right now. The loss or change that has been cruelly foisted upon you is triggering some anxiety as you struggle to get past it. We hope you know that you've got a ton of support available to you, so don't alienate yourself from the world.

GEMINI

May 21-June 21

You better check yourself before you wreck yourself, Gemini. It's a real messy week, and opportunities abound for you to fuck up. There's a real need for you to approach your goals in proportion to the goals themselves. Is your ego a bit larger than the situation calls for?

CANCER

June 22-July 22

In the midst of a bunch of baloney, Cancer, you can have a fruitful, and even pleasant, week if you approach old problems in a new, exciting way. Though you are filled with fabulous inner strength and can-do optimism right now, we still advise taking baby steps toward fixing these lingering annoyances once and for all.

LEO

July 23-Aug. 22

Leo, it's time to settle into the cubicle of your heart and fire up the love computer. Double-click on the folder marked "My Relationships" and get to work on that document titled "Communication." We expect the forthcoming report to detail the personal risks you're willing to take to benefit the longevity of a connection.

VIRGO

Aug. 23-Sept. 22

You're out of balance, Virgo. And when a Virgo is out of balance, shit doesn't get done. And when shit doesn't get done, it throws a Virgo out of balance, Virgos being extremely productive types. Do you see the cycle of abuse here? Apply yourself in a way that balances your gains with your losses.

LIBRA

Sept. 23-Oct. 22

Libra, what can we say? You're bummed out. Nothing we do, no advice we dispense, will lessen the stark reality of your major bummed-out-ness. However, we would be remiss if we didn't offer you something. This disappointment is an opportunity for you to move through your feelings with compassion for yourself.

SCORPIO

Oct. 23-Nov. 21

Sometimes, Scorpio, our families hurt our feelings. They let us down. Friggin' bunch of jerks. And when we're dealing with the families that brought us into this cruel world (rather than the excellent families we've found to go to movies and shit-talk with), sometimes we have to think in terms of harm reduction. That's your week.

SAGITTARIUS

Nov. 22-Dec. 21

When your head and your heart are divided, Sag, there's no hope of reaching internal consensus. So unless you want to sit in an eternal, futile meeting with yourself, aim instead to make a decision that feels in alignment with your integrity. You won't be totally happy with it, but you've got to make a choice.

CAPRICORN

Dec. 22-Jan. 19

Capricorn, in the face of the impressive amount of anxiety you're feeling, we urge you to not make any impulsive moves. You may think a sudden burst of spontaneity will shake your bad feelings away, but alas, it will only intensify them. Find a stable middle ground while this emotional storm passes.

AQUARIUS

Jan. 20-Feb. 18

It's true, Aquarius: You're officially "on fire." Your work is paying off big time, you're offering yourself to the world, and the world is flinging its panties at you like a slaving groupie. But at the end of the day, gentle Water Bearer, what really counts is how you feel, and you're feeling funky.

PISCES

Feb. 19-March 20

Pisces, it's time to move on. You want to move slowly, and you want to move steadily, but seriously: You want to move. Keep your heart open and take your time with it. And don't worry about shit being perfect — perfection is hardly ever important. All that matters is significant movement. **SFBG**

By Michelle Tea and Jessica Lanyadoo

Award-winning writer Michelle Tea and intuitive counselor Jessica Lanyadoo have been fraternizing with fate together for the past seven years. Call Lanyadoo for an astrology or tarot reading at (415) 336-8354. Write to Double Team at lovedoubleteam@hotmail.com.

connections

> women seeking men

NICE BLACK WOMAN

SF, 47, 5'1", 150lbs, respectful, easygoing, N/S, N/D, enjoys walks on the lake, working out, flea markets, dining out, movies, traveling. Looking for a WM, 47-60, friendship first. **7749547**

LEGGS FOR ADVENTURE

Extremely tall, married, middle-aged white housewife, about 225lbs, seeks WM under 50, for weekday daytime intimacy. Be healthy, discreet and patient, please. **77477004**

DO YOU WHO CAN HELP UP

SF, 37, Cancer, independent, healthcare professional, enjoys travel, scuba, motorcycling, time with family and friends. Seeking adventurous, passionate, independent SWHM, 30-42, **7948128 @ DivaQD**

LEAVE THE ONE

SF, 64, seeks SWHM, 58-70, secure, N/S, healthy, 6'1" + able to travel occasionally. Friendship first. **7943658**

CREATIVE AND SPIRITUAL

Attractive SF, artist/designer seeking a creative, spiritual man, 50-60, 5'3" +, N/S, race open, who appreciates the arts, and ethnic restaurants, world travel, is open minded and adventurous. **7711596 @ Sophia22**

STYISH BLACK MALE

Sisters of the order of St. Dominadora. Seeks submissive repair man as boy toys, cross-dressers can work in drag. Surrender to a higher Female Power. **7869149**

WITEL THEATRE ARTS

Attractive and personable SWF, blonde/blue, seeks SWHM, 55-70, N/S, companion for San Francisco concerts, theatre, etc. Could extend into other activities and venues. Let's explore. **7853534**

LET'S TALK!

SF, 40, 5'3", N/S, N/D. Looking for a SWHM, 30-40, who enjoys traveling, dining out, music, working out, animals and cuddling. **7700316**

BEHIND BLACK MALE

WIEF, 65, 5'4", 150lbs, financially secure, good sense of humor, enjoys jazz and easy listening music. Seeking BM, 58-70, for friendship, maybe companionship. **7770981**

WIVES, YOURS-LOOKING

SF, 44, seeks caring, honest, easygoing SWHM, 34-50, who was born in another country. **7779955**

SEXY SEXY GUY!!!

Playful, mischievous, blonde, petite, sexy SWF, 43, seeks arrangement with discreet, generous gentleman. Let's get together. **856271**

SPIRITUAL, MYTEL

Attractive, SF, 32, blonde/hazel, slender, health-oriented lifestyle, sing, loves dancing, the symphony, jazz/chamber music, theater, hiking, die hard Red Sox fan, loves long peaceful walks along the ocean, interested in long-term relationship, with non-smoking man with similar interests. **7895786**

WIFE AND ONE

SWF, 54, 5'5", 145lbs, intelligent, secure, warm, romantic, likes music, cooking, movies, walks. ISO SWM to hang out with, and maybe more, of good character. **723646**

I NEED A HERO

SF, 34, no kids, classy, sexy, seeks SWHM, 34-45, confident, professional and sweet. He wants a LTR and a friend. Not looking for perfection, just someone perfect for me. **731514**

I CAN LOVE U BETTER

Retired SWF, 65, 5'4", gray/dark, Aries, N/S, enjoys dining out, animals. Seeking WM, 55-75, N/S, easygoing, caring, with positive attitude, for friendship, possible romance. **7934351**

BEAUTIFUL GREEN EYES

Pretty, slender S/J, 48, athletic, artistic, adventurous, sensual, highly educated. Loves animals, the arts. Seeks SWM, 46-60, attractive, athletic, well-educated, seeking partnership of the mind, body and soul. Must live near Palo Alto. **7909464**

TALL, TITANIC, LYNICAL LARS

Looking for fellow traveler with intellectual and emotional depth, 50+, 5'10" +, I'm a theater/film buff, love psychology, philosophy, the arts, healing, travel, cute canines. **7906415**

WOMAN AND SOCIETY

Retired, 59-3, 3'5", blonde/blue, N/S, easygoing, enjoys academics pursuits, appreciate nature, specialty desserts, oceans, and gardens. Seeking man, for friendship, maybe more. **7743487**

FRIEND FIRST

SWF, 54, 5'10", enjoys pets, home, movies, and dining out. Seeking nice, humorous, down-to-earth SHWM, 50-69, for friends first, possible LTR. Hayward **7843619**

GET IN TOUCH

SF, 28, 5'3", 120lbs, black/brown. Looking for a SWM, 30-50, who is outgoing, romantic and down-to-earth. **7899923**

ARE YOU AS TIRED OF

being lonely as I am? SHF, 51, N/S, likes to cook. Seeking an honest, hard-working WM, 50-50, N/S, for fun and friendship. **7857963**

DO APPLE TRANSPLANT

SF, 18, 5'4", 140lbs, Leo, smoker, up front, realistic, fun, with goals and ambitions, seeks same in BM, 18-24, **7893915**

DO YOU AND GENTLE MAN

SF, young 50s, tall, slender, brown/brown, warm, sensitive, enjoys swimming, bicycling, reading, hiking, cooking, cuddling, symphony. Seeking polite, fit, caring, mature, educated, traditional S/DWM, 46-59, 5'11" +, N/S, light drinker, for friendship, possibly a great companionship. **78660214**

LET US BE FRIENDS

Attractive, hispanic-american female, 63, slender, petite, beautiful brown eyes, nice-looking, caring, independent, enjoys the beauty of nature, seeks retired, tall, Irish Catholic male. **7861416**

ATTRACTIVE S/F

Petite SHF, financially secure, enjoys music, dancing, walks, art, good conversation. Seeking well-groomed A/W/M, 55-63, N/S, for LTR. San Francisco peninsula area only, please. **7651494**

DEAFUTATION

I am looking for an extremely gracious, monetarily endowed older gentleman, who wishes to zealously spoil a most magnificent piece of art candy. **787292**

WEALTHY SUGAR DADDY SOUGHT

Bi female, 55', 115lbs, golden brown skin, sexy, fit, beautiful, intelligent and classy, seeking arrangement. Ageless, independent. Respectful and discreet. **7760454**

AWAITING YOUR CALL

DPF, 56, 5'5", 155lbs, mother with grown children, fair complexion, strawberry-blonde hair, well-educated, business owner, enjoys scenic drives, day trips. Seeking similar gentleman to share life, love, lasting happiness. **7856651**

A+ LOCAL! NOVEL SINGLE!

SF, 23 yrs. Cute, fit, blonde, looking for a great sense of humor and a cute smile. Call 800-489-2132 xZ016.

GENTLE BEAUTY SEEKER

generous Gent. Adventurous, sexy woman, 30s, seeks kind, classy gentleman for mutually beneficial arrangement. Sincere inquiries only, please. **7942147**

SEXY ASIAN/TAIWANESE

seeks benefactor. SF, 35, 5'4", 128lbs, full lips, almond-shaped eyes, long-length hair, N/S, possibly mutually beneficial discreet arrangement with PM, 40-60, N/S. **7869123**

RESOLVE ME

DWF, 65, 10 yr old child, N/S, 44, Sagittarius, Seeking SM, 18-65, for romance. Architectural designer, draftee, graphic artist, and background in pre-med. **7867034**

ISO BEST FRIEND W/ CHRISTIANITY

SF, 54, young-at-heart seeking perfectly imperfect playmate for long walks, lots of laughter, movies, concerts, and magical moments! **778813**

SEXUAL MIND UNRAVEL

by interesting, attractive lady, into movies, books, music, publishing and keeping trim and fit. **7887312**

HI, I LIVE IN HAWAII 54 YEARS OLD, AN ARTIST

interested in long term companionship, long walks and talks, sharing days adventures. Traveled to Europe, like European men. American men, love to cook and watch movies. **7952020**

CHANCE OF A LIFETIME

Sensuous, looking for love, vivacious, enjoys fun, good times, congenial, polished, brazen, curious for you, young-at-heart, singing, hiking, bad rubs, outdoors. **7936396**

WANTED

SF, "wanted," seeking a "Antonio Banderas" look alike. Must be hispanic with same body type, eyes and must speak spanish and english. Must look like Antonio Banderas as much as possible. Serious inquiries only. **7900119**

WAGE ME LAUGH

Embrace me, dance with me, challenge my mind. Youthful SBF, 57, Attractive, petite, intelligent. Desires generous gentleman, great companionship, great fun, great escapes. **7711487**

LOOKING FOR A KINKY MALE TO FILL MY NEEDS AND

wants and als every desire. **7880722**

> men seeking women

ARE U ON THE TRAIL

SBM, 38, 6'2", 215lbs, athletic build, likes baseball, looking to meet a cool, sweet lady to kick it with and have a good time. **7854925**

HONEST, ROMANTIC

SM, 40, 150lbs, 5'2", looking for fun, sociable, open-minded S/F to share good times and more. **7912234**

SEEKING SPECIAL FEMALE

SWM, 39, sensitive, easygoing, open-minded, fun-loving, enjoys laughing and many other varied interests. Seeking SWHF, 24-36, N/S. **7954469 @ MuzzleNOLA**

LOOKING TO START A FAMILY

Asian sweetheart, slender and nice, desired by SWFM, 39, 5'7", 150lbs, athletic build, bald/bald, home and business owner. Having children is goal. **7349161**

LET'S MEET

Male, 54, Pisces, N/S, enjoys walking, beaches, and home life. Seeking woman, 40-50, for LTR. **7959203**

WANDERING S/F

Handsome, physically fit man, 41, looking to date and have fun with 60+, slim, attractive female. Hope to hear from you. **7561758**

WIFE WANTED

Loving, honest, affectionate SM, 38, 6', blonde/hazel, enjoys weekend getaways. ISO beautiful lady insidout, to get to know, share fun and see what happens next. **7951036**

A GOOD GUY

SWM, 60, 6'1", 220lbs, dark, graying hair, dark eyes, ISO attractive, playful, intelligent, low-key, SF, 40-59, loyal warm and sincere, N/S, without children and/or baggage. **7954358**

ISO AREA

DWM, 35, 5'7", 160lbs, brown/blue, very easygoing, honest, kind, Cancer, smoker, seeks sweet, honest, kind woman, 22-35, petite ss, nice unimportant. **7933415**

SEEK OFF LONG TRAVEL PHONE HOME

Open-minded SWM, 42, smoker, interested in cyber and phone sex, loves role play and age play. Seeking woman, 18-50, to join me. **7833940**

ISO DISCREET RELATIONSHIP

WM, 37, Oakland/East Bay area, Virgo, smoker, seeks discreet, no-strings-attached physical relationship with a woman, 18-50, smoker, any race. **7934538**

INTIMATE ENCOUNTER

Nice-looking Italian-American SWM, 44, 6'3", dark brown/dark brown, lean, Cancer, N/S, seeks woman, 35-55, N/S, no strings, possible ongoing love. **7941139**

GENTLE MASTER

Very fit, attractive SWPM, 39, 10+ years experience in domination, N/S, seeks woman, 18-50, interested in exploring her submissive sexuality. Safe, sane, disease-free. **7942431**

A GENTLE STYLE

Because I love. Do you have a sensitive nature too? SWM, 5'11", good-looking, fit and healthy, 56. Seeking friendship, maybe romance. **7943621**

WANT YOU TO KNOW

SBM, 65, 5'11", retired educator, active, slim, knowledgeable, creative, kind and caring gentleman. Seeking a charming pretty lady, 50s-60s, to share similar interests. **7462878**

WANT SOMEbody

SWM, 47, Virgo, seeks mature, African-American S/D, 32-60, for friendship, possible LTR. **7400491**

CAT MAN IN SAN FRANCISCO

DBM, young 45, 5'11", 225lbs, N/S, good-looking, creative, open minded, outgoing, likes art, animals, music, dancing, soul. Looking for attractive, sexy, shapely woman for relationship. **7759471**

BEAUTIFUL BROWN EYES

and Italian curls mix with this high-flying eagle's talon of steel, which are committed to personal growth, creative expression, unlimited journeys of the heart, soul. **7719804**

EAST BAY LOVEHUNTER

Gent, 50s, 5'10", blonde/blue, fit, is seeking arrangement with attractive woman, prefer petite. **7823167**

DRIVER & SAN WISCONSIN

Retired SWM, 66, 5'9", 175lbs, gray (but not bald), perfect hearing in 1 ear, N/S, seeks WF, 50-65, N/S, for dating. **7939025**

FOUR FISTS

Attractive male, 42, honest, generous, discreet, seeks attractive female with shapely legs and pretty feet for foot worshipper's fantasy. **7875307**

A SWEET COUNTRY GUY

SM, 58, 5'8", 160lbs, fit, retired military, enjoys classic rock, quiet times, good talks, having fun, ISO special, good-hearted, commitment-minded lady to share life/love with. **7349658**

DOCTOR, WRITER

Just returned from 2 years in Europe and Greece doing research/work-related, anxious to reacquaint with chyn/ing/itsop/art scene. Interested in meeting young, thinking, well-read woman. **7405757**

LOTS TO OFFER

SM, 6'1", 200lbs, athletic build. Enjoys reading, movies, travel, arts, music in spare time. Seeking attractive, down-to-earth female/wigrest SOH. **7859990**

HILLO LADIES

Married male, 48, brown hair, green eyes, 5'7", seeks petite married white, Hispanic, Asian lady, 30-50, for discreet sensual fun. Hope to hear from you. **7775819**

ARE YOU THE ONE

An over-educated book lover from East Bay seeking a SF over-educated book lover. Easy going, well informed, with a sense of humor. **7862908**

NO LOVELY LADY

SWM, 67, 5'8", retired, homeowner. I am looking for a lady 50-75, to share my many riches. **7863882**

TALL, DARK & HANDSOME

Financially secure Italian SWM, 43, Pisces, N/S, seeks woman, 20-45, for soulmate in life. **7865696**

SEEKING OVERSIGHT W/

Attractive, well-built, sensual, uninhibited, easygoing artist type WM, 36, Aries, N/S, seeks WF, 18-48, for fun get-togethers at your place. **7867558**

SHAKE MY WORLD

SF, 56, seeking a sensual relationship. Homeowner and financially secure. Enjoy dining out, good conversation, physical fitness, reading, and travel. Prefer someone with similar attributes. San Francisco/Permuia. **7868824**

HOW ABOUT A MOVIE?

SWM, 20, black/brown, student, Virgo, N/S, works in a home improvement store, loves skiing, rock and country music. Seeking woman, 18-45, for dating. **797076**

ARE YOU THE DANC

SM, 27, 6'3", seeking a special female to enjoy interest with. Someone who enjoys walks on the beach, rock music, evenings in/out, etc. Call me! **787142**

Considerate, good looking, single, athletic,

affluent, well adjusted 50 y/o male seeking energetic, upbeat, uninhibited woman, 40-60. **7875606**

DISCREET, LIVING, YOUNG...

Nice-looking Italian-American SWM, 44, 6'3", dark brown/dark brown, lean, Cancer, N/S, seeks woman, 35-55, N/S, no strings, possible ongoing love. **7941139**

ALONE IN ALABAMA

Cuban SM, 30, 5'8", 160lbs, Taurus, N/S, loves to dance, loves dining out and dancing. Seeking HF, 18-40, N/S, to hit the dance floor with. **7845586**

AVOIDANCE

SM, N/S, construction worker, enjoys movies, live music, dancing, beaches. Seeking woman, 21-30, fit, educated, attractive. **7875988**

FRIENDSHIP & MORE

SBM 36, 6'2, athletic, employed and handsome. Seeks adventurous, SF into movies, beaches, travel, music, etc., any race, for friendship & possibly more. **7877028**

WOMAN GUY

Tall, fit, SBM, 50, seeks like-minded SF, 40-55, who's affectionate, open-minded, adventurous, secure, who enjoys movies, theater, dining, music, comedy and travel. Race open. **7826723**

YOU WON'T BE BORED!

SBM, 31, 5'7", 145lbs, D/free, well-endowed, fit, clean. Looking for SF, 18-35, N/children, interested and takes care of herself. **7858085**

RECREATION REQUIRED FOR

travel, adventure, romance. This feature writer, actor, and world traveler, 61, with good looks, sharp wit, seeks pretty, caring gal, 40-65, who loves blues music. **7875549**

RESPOND TO ADS BY CALLING 1-900-226-7086 \$1.99/MIN 18+
OR RESPOND BY CREDIT CARD, CALL 1-877-337-3292
PLACE YOUR OWN AD 1-877-895-7996
CHECK US OUT ONLINE SFBGCONNECTIONS.COM

FINCHSPRINT FIRST

SM, 32, Asian Indian, 5'8", 142 lbs looking for a woman for friendship and more. **7883044**

PASSIONATE AFFAIR

Married PWM, seeks discreet relationship with open-minded, free-spirited woman. Very experienced and enjoy being alone. San Francisco area only. **7887286**

TAKE A CHANCE

HM, 33, 5'9", likes dancing, the beach, dining out and more. Looking for beautiful WF, 18-35, who enjoys doing the same things. **7753666**

FAIR-CONFLICTED BLACK WOMAN

Old-school, professional SBM, 50, 5'10", 185lbs, cool, fit, handsome, seeks far lady, successful, stable, passionate who's free to give and receive love. **7891022**

Dominant Englishman (45), attractive, sophisticated and well educated. seeking a submissive woman. Together we will explore the limits of our sexuality. **7895807**

DO YOU WANT COUNTRYMAN

SHM, 45, Pisces, N/S, seeks HF, 30-60, who loves jazz music, movies, and walks in the park. **7895425**

SEEMINGLY IN THE NIGHT FEELING

SWM, 62, well-off, N/S, loves movies, Vegas, Lake Tahoe, and dining out. Seeking good-looking woman, 25-35, strictly for fun. **7895200**

SEXY SENIOR

Nice-looking SWM, 63, 150lbs, fit, seeks small, fit, senior lady who still enjoys sex. Nice dinners and foreign movies, included. Be a nice person. **7753080**

TIME COMEBACK

SM, 43, romantic, enjoys hiking, photography. ISO single female, 30, who knows who she

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CHECK US OUT ONLINE SFBGCONNECTIONS.COM

> men seeking women

LOTS OF LOVE 2 LOVE

SWPM, 45, financially secure, fit, healthy, looking for SB/WF, 25-40, for love, cuddling sharing romantic times. Hoping to find the right one. **✆925437**

NO GROOMING HEINT

SWM, 43, Fisches, N/S, seeks an attractive (inside and out), genuine, loving woman, 20-42, with integrity, for wiring and dining, travel, and good conversation. **✆934795**

ISO STRONG, OVERSTIMULATED...

Partner: SWM, 60, strong, intelligent, tolerant, good-looking. Looking for an attractive SF, 40-60, who is intelligent, sensitive with an honest, open nature. **✆931587**

LET'S SAIL AWAY

SWM, 58, 5'10", 170lbs, enjoys sailing, theater, jazz, book stores, cooking, etc. Seeking someone who's comfortably with herself and enjoys life to the fullest, 40-80. **✆902435**

ADVENTURE/VENTURE

New in town, building new home. Need advice with furnishings. Someone who likes art, live music, good restaurants, sailing on weekends. Preferable San Francisco resident. **✆909915**

WANT TO BE A PART

SWJM, 55, 5'7", 145lbs, N/S, N/Drugs, never been married, rock-n-roller. Seeking companionship in the Bay Area. Residing in Marin County. Seeking women of color, 40-50. **✆866957**

PASSION POWER AND TENDRY

Exciting Italian, 72, healthy, muscular and financially secure, seeks female, 41-61, for LTR. **✆840059**

LOOKING FOR A HEARTY...

of gold. SWM, stable financially and emotionally, one woman man, warm and loyal, seeking LTR. Redwood City. **✆252894**

BURNER EXCHANGE

Let's try each other's cooking and talk. Stender SWM, 45, seeks slender woman, 20-48, any race. Enjoys films, nature, dancing. **✆882926**

ARE YOU MISS RIGHT?

Handsoms, fit Latino male, 36, caramel complexion, looking for Latina or black female, 18-36, for friendship and possible relationship. **✆949736**

Looking for girl wanting to share home with older guy that needs help and wants or needs the help if this is something you might want to try by email me. **✆950562**

FOR WHATEVER

Male, 39, looking for women around my age to eat, drink and be merry. Ethnicity not as important as intelligence. **✆951513**

LET'S GET TOGETHER

SWM, 45, handsome Exec visiting Bay Area (San Jose) Feb 14-16, seeks dinner date with intelligent, attractive SF for intelligent conversation, food, wine and I'm fun, fit, a good listener. **✆918948**

OFF TO THE RACES

Hanbunious stallion, 40, seeks paramour filly for canter. Can offer plenty of oats, but San Francisco housing does not allow for separate stalls! **✆895961**

ARE YOU THE ONE

Athletic male, 66 seeking fun and romantic relationship with woman. **✆875655**

LET'S TALK

Chemical engineer, likes fishing, camping, dancing, movies, walking the beach, playing sports. Qualities in partner: outgoing, funny, nice, slim AF, 5'7", the max weight 165lbs. **✆881167**

SWM, seeking activity partner with similar interests - I live in Napa and have a great job which I love and go to the gym every night - my new year is 'looking up and I want to complete the picture with a good partner - David **✆896443**

LIVE LIFE LOUDLY

SBM, 5'11, heavy set and handsome. Looking for a lady that loves life and having fun without alot of drama all the time. **✆900064**

LOVE OUT YOUR FANTASY

SM, 34, good looking, personable, professional that would like to occasionally meet with older SF to act out any fantasy you may have. Please contact me for conversation. **✆906830**

40 AND BEAUTIFUL

I love the outdoors hike,bike,walk,talk. Smile and have a nice time.Roller just not into games. **✆913795**

DAY TIME LOVER

passionate man seeks daytime lover. Often free during days and would love to spend quality time with a passionate woman. I love touching, kissing, licking, sucking, tasting, and orgasmic penetration. **✆921880**

ETHIOPIAN WOMAN SOUGHT BY SBM FOR LTR
SBM 30, 6'2, handsome, smart, athletic, clean cut, sense of humor, and works full time seeks beautiful Ethiopian SF who enjoys playing pool and live entertainment. **✆928282**

ARE YOU THE ONE

Hello,I'ma single bi.kmale.that's just looking for a new female life friend someone who is drama free. **✆926103**

> men seeking men

LEAN AND MUSCULINE

friendly, mellow SWM, 44, would like ongoing friendship/relationship, with another man similar in age, who's lean and masculine enjoy films, hiking and intimacy. **✆866505**

VERSATILE GUY

Married BWMM, 6'1", 180lbs, good-looking, blue-collar guy, clean, safe, discreet, seeks versatile male, H/W proportionate, for giving and receiving oral/hv fun. Race unimportant. **✆853267**

DADDY SEESKS YOUNGER GUY

Open-minded GHM, 50, seeks young man, 18-45, who wants wisdom and spiritual growth from your gay big brotherhood, a guide to today's gay world. **✆896362 @ mohamed101**

NEEDS CO

Nice-looking, clean-cut, healthy senior with no teeth will do you weenie a big favor. Masculine GWM seeks straight, bi or gay, masculine man. **✆872884**

BEINGING HANDED MALE

Good-looking WM seeking first time experience with a married male who would like to dress me up as a female and share fantasies with. **✆830556**

HOPING TO MEET

easygoing, masculine looking, SWM, 39, on the submissive side. Enjoys spending time with a caring guy, 18-60, that I can treat with admiration, respect, love. **✆924561 @ motorsport2**

JUST FOR FUN!

Married SWM, 5'10", 190lbs, black/brown, D/Dr. Seeking SWBM, 35-50, who enjoys anal/oral, D/Dr. attractive, no strings attached. **✆894555**

VERY OPEN MINDED GUY

Very outgoing WM, 22, 5'8", 160lbs, attractive, N/S, loves drawing, doodling, and learning new things in the bedroom. Seeking man, 18-29, with great soul. **✆894692**

WANT BOTTOMBOY

East Bay gay looking for fun. Discreet top, clean, good-looking, straight acting men from East Bay area or just the Bay area. **✆927079 @ bottomboy77**

LOOKING FOR YOU

BWMM, 35, seeks same in a SM, 21-45, for discreet get togethers. I am 5'7", 160lbs, brown/olive, open-minded and down-to-earth. **✆902793**

BLACK MALES

Nice-looking, senior WM, 63, 160lbs, fit, very clean, seeks new experience as bottom. Prefer life-minded BM. **✆847825**

FIRST TIME FOR EVERYTHING

MHM, 18, 5'11", 185lbs, D/Dr. Seeking an older SWM, 30-45, who is attractive, has a good shape, preferred married men, open-minded and fun to be with. **✆931562**

FINDING NEW WHITE

Friendly, open-minded WM is looking to meet another slim guy of a different country or race, 18-48, for friendship and intimate fun. **✆753266**

QUEST HERE FOR MARRIED...

straight, bi or 1st timers 35+. Mellow SWM, 52, HIV, clean, patient, fun. Own place. No reciprocation required. Be clean, no long hair, drugs. **✆754037**

NUDE PSYCHOTHERAPY

Lay on my couch naked while amateur psychiatrist listens to your problems and sexual fantasies. SWM, 45, seeks trim-waisted man, under 45. **✆867597**

ATTRACTIVE AND FRIENDLY

Asian male, smooth, in-shape, interested in receiving full-body (head to toe) buttocks, chest, feet, etc massage, from experienced masseurs, on a regular basis. Calls answered! **✆754686**

STUP HAIR

Coinced, masculine, fit guy gives you orders and gets you on your knees. Safe, painless role-play fun for trim-waisted guys born after 1960. **✆753246**

NAMED FANTASIES?

Strip search? photography? strip poker? or you name it Male, 44, slender body, straight-acting, looking for the same, under 45, for safe role play fun. **✆991177**

BURNING HOT MAN A NEED...

to suck a big one. I'll do it your way. Make me your slave. All calls answered. **✆753249**

CRAWLING AFFECTION?

Slender, masculine SWM, 45, N/S, seeks similar man, 20-45, race open, who would like a canny new friend to talk to and hold on to. **✆862331**

DMG COMMUNICATION

Interested in meeting mature and discreet men, including seniors in the east bay. **✆778621**

SUPPERY RECTAL EXAM

Doctor massages your butt hole, jacking you off. Spanking, rimming, sniffing? Shoot big limit! Limit pussy/ha asses. 20-45/all sizes. **✆791955**

STRAIGHT ON U WANTED

Easygoing, slim guy, 44, seeks masculine, safe, discreet guy, with slim body, who would like to get together for one or more erotic sessions. **✆897273**

FREE MESSAGE

Strong-handed, straight-acting SWM, 45, offers a soothing, sensual touching experience for trim, masculine man, 18-47. **✆960940**

BEEN AND SEX

Let's drink a few beers, talk about sex, and play strip poker. BWMM, 44, trim tight build, masculine, N/S, seeks same, 20-44. **✆875314**

ORAL SUBMISSION

Tight-bodied DM, 43, wants a tight-bodied, married, bi guy to strip me and tell me what to do to make you feel good all over. **✆877130**

BARED BY THE SUNDAY

Slender, masculine WM, 45, N/S, seeks similar man, under 45, N/S, any race, who'd enjoy good clean fun with warm water and bar of soap. **✆854243**

ADONIS BLACK C-M-GRIND

Monogamous, affectionate, cuddly, healthy and physically sensualized, wishes to meet a 60+, mature gent. We won't know unless we try. **✆931245**

POSSIBLE LTR

Attractive, caring, secure, educated SWM, 60, 5'11", 200lbs, smooth, enjoys travel, home time, kissing. Seeking small-framed, smooth SAM, 50+, affectionate, versatile, smoker, with free time. **✆8788723**

WILL YOU BE THERE?

Single male, 41, Aries, N/S, seeks single man, 65-85, who is affectionate, loving, caring, to share quiet evenings and soft music. **✆792325**

GOOD-LOOKING

Married BWMM, 49, 5'6", 195lbs, dirty blond/brn, clean-shaven, looking for guys in Marin to play and have fun with. **✆805514**

TOOTHLESS C...

wants your dick in my mouth. Nice-looking, senior WM, 5'8", 160lbs, seeks straight, bi or gay WM to service. **✆833128**

SEEKING OLDER AND WELL-ENDED

Very attractive BWMM, 38, seeks discrete relationship with older gentleman in the San Francisco area. I am fit, very attractive, fun, discrete, disease free. **✆834990**

FIN READY

virgin male seeking tuition into sexy and kinky acts must be D/D free and patient. I am a new convert to this act of love making, all calls answered. **✆940157**

DOMINATE ME

Straight-looking divorced guy, 41, good build. Needs a guy like me to call me names and worship your cock and butt. Hairy a plus. **✆753236**

PREPARED FIRST

Easy going, masculine, professional man of color (bl/k/rn) seeking other similar men of color for friendship or whatever comes up... **✆86136**

YOUNGER CARNIVORE?

This older gentleman, discreet, safe, versatile, has many years of experience with erotic pleasure. Do the women in your life leave your fantasies unfulfilled? **✆904695**

LET'S GET TOGETHER

GWM, 39, looking to meet and date intelligent, creative guys my age or a little older. **✆919852**

ARE YOU WITH ME

SM, 35, South-american guy, 148 lbs, 5'6", 8" gut, cut, d/f ree, no prp, easy-going, travel, open mind, looking to get sucked, rimmed and more. **✆924107**

LET'S GET TOGETHER

married guy, seeking married guy for occasional sex sessions. 6'190 white bronzo athletic 36 7". Hit me up and let's get together. **✆934826**

> women seeking women

Femme - Talkable, Inquisitive, Laugh easily, Want to know new people over a cup of coffee. Therapist, homebody, Love family dog lover. Love swimming, sober Social Justice and human rights. Seeking woman comfortable in her own body. **✆953757**

connections

> missed connections

EMILY WE MET AT 11.11.11

you gave me a voyo and phone number, still have it. I've lost the phone number. Let's hook up, drink, sing The Foo Fighters. **✆815421**

10/2 Bluegrass Banjo (main) stage

Youtblonde blonde/skirt on your back girlfriends standing around. Me, goatee bi. Hawaii could only say "WOW!" Hope I use you as Landmark Mid afternoon. **✆878548**

WHERE: COMEDY CLUB

You: Blue/Green striped shirt, short hair, Great smile, front row for Wand Sykes. Me: Brown shirt, short hair, front row. Wanted to slip you my number but was not sure if your companion was a lover or friend. Would like to meet you. **✆909446**

I SAT AROUND

FROM YOU IN THE 38 CHAIR ON 10/2/10
You: brown hair, blue star necklace brown skirt, flip flops, beautiful. Me: blue cap, sunglasses, Jean jacket, headphones. I took off my sunglasses, looked at you as you left the bus. Great energy between us. Lets get together. **✆919220**

CAN WE TALK?

We started a nice conversation about Dostoevsky and Vonnegut on the flight into Oakland. I'd love to continue it. **✆930570**

> friends/activities

"PASS THE POLAROID"

A tongue-in-cheek dining adventure. Let's excavate gastronomic gems in the Bay area together, from neighborhood spots to putting on the Ritz. **✆732457**

LIKE TO SING?

Singer seeks other singers, male or female, as well as acoustic guitarists, for singalongs to the music of the Beatles, Eagles, etc. **✆996276**

NEED BOOKWORKS

ISO BM bookworms, 25-42, for intellectual conversations. Clean background. Must like history, politics, current events. Prefer Lees or Virgos. Must be nerdy and wear glasses!!! **✆922768**

> kinksters

WHAT I WANT

SM, 21, 5'10", clean-cut, looking for sexy, hot, outgoing lady open-minded unencumbered for intimate encounters and adult times. **✆950687**

WANT TO BE NERD

Afternoon, touchy-feely SBM, 42, seeks open-minded, uninhibited lady who enjoys good times, sex and trying anything new. I'm here to please. **✆945375**

IN WALK SEEKS SAME

married BM, 37, professional health-conscious, in good shape, seeks bi male, 25-45, for mutual enjoyment and connection. **✆890054**

YOUR WAY

Submissive senior gentleman eager to please. Respects/seeks bossy male in San Fran area for fun. Day times only please. **✆896951**

EXPLORE THE POSSIBILITIES

SM, 45, sophisticated dominant Englishman slim, attractive, well educated and well traveled. Seeking a submissive SF, to explore the limits of our sexuality. **✆906794**

JUSTY WOMAN WANTED...

who likes to sit on top and unload. Seeks woman, any race, shoe size, etc. poetic A+. Me: SWM, 55, 946075

I LOVE YOUR NEW HAIR!

Very attractive cross-dresser, very feminine, very young-looking bi-WMM, seeks cute, adventurous bi-females/bi-couples/males, for intimate bi-action. Please be sexy, safe, discrete, and sweet. **✆885724**

KINKY

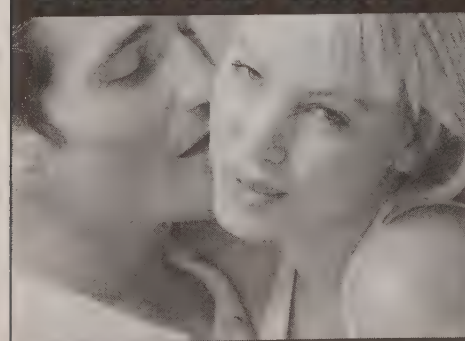
Sexy, open-minded, safe, discreet HM, 40, seeks Filipino females, 35-65, in need of oral pleasure. **✆950117**

Are you one of Miss Amanda's former top worshippers? Miss Amanda ten heavenly tests will be back in the Bay Area for a list between approx. Feb 2nd - Feb. 11th. Former clients are encouraged to get in touch, in order to catch up on all the missed worship! **✆903019**

EMERGENCY VIBRATOR

Creole BBW, dominant, with huge fat butt, seeks WM, 30-70 must be obedient, funny, grateful, serviant. Oral, anal, toy play. Must be interviewed for opportunity. **✆802472**

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Raw Deal

By Andrea Nemerson
> andrea@altsexcolumn.com

Dear Andrea:

Should I worry that my husband, who says he is straight because he just isn't attracted to guys, might be subconsciously or secretly gay? I'm concerned because he really likes anal sex. I think it is disgusting and painful and my first experience with it was rape, and I don't get why he likes it, let alone how he can enjoy it when it causes me such discomfort. I've agreed to do it periodically, in return for him giving up a vehicle that I think is dangerous, but I'm concerned about it.

Love,
Trade-off

Dear Off:

Yes, yes, it's normal. It's not gay if he does it with you, especially since he isn't even attracted to guys, and (as a Hispanophone friend puts it) "bla, bla, y bla." Do a search and you'll find me explaining this approximately monthly for the last eight years. My concern is not that your husband is a buttmonkey, but that you are willing to put up with something you find painful and humiliating just so he won't ... what? Ride a motorcycle? Unless he made it himself from a cheap Albanian kit, put it together with only half the bolts called for while drunk, and rides it blindfolded, I'd say you're getting the raw end of the deal.

Love,
Andrea

Dear Andrea:

I'm a wanker. I call help lines and try to get the people who answer them to have phone sex with me. It works best with youth lines, but some crisis lines will do it too. I know this is wrong, but I can't afford phone sex. Do you know of any phone sex lines that are free? I heard San Francisco Sex Information will do it, but they hang up on me. What are some good numbers to call?

Love,
Wanky Wanker

My concern is not that your husband is a homo buttmonkey, but that you are willing to put up with something you find painful and humiliating.

Dear Wank:

OK, that's pretty funny. If you're sincere, asking me this question would seem to imply that you expect me to give you the numbers of nonprofit do-gooding agencies like the ones I work often work with, but with slightly less well-trained volunteers? I'll get right on that.

Actually, I wouldn't even be answering this except that it gives me a perfect opportunity to run the sort of public-service announcement that I usually eschew, but this one — "phone volunteers, beware" — is near and dear to me. So thanks for writing, asshole.

Phone-wanking is a fairly common behavior or compulsion (which one is more accurate depends on whether the wanker "could stop anytime" or truly feels like he cannot help himself) and has little in common with the dreary-seeming but harmless practice of paying people to talk dirty with you. Your basic phone-wanker is more like the old-fashioned "What are you wearing?"-type of late-night, random-dialing heavy breather. Your help-line wanker, on the contrary, is looking to score some nonconsensual jollies off of some well-meaning volunteer at suicide prevention or various youth talk lines, as you mentioned your wankerself. Now think about that: It "works best with youth lines"? Because why? Because the youthful staffers don't have the years of practice and built-up emotional callus it takes to understand just how creepy and devious adults can be? Because it's easy to snatch kids' emotional candy? If you really do do this, and you hadn't quite thought of your behavior in quite those terms, I suggest you start now.

There may have been a time when pay-by-the-minute phone sex was the only option for those looking for a truly alienated sexual encounter with a professional orgasm-faker, but in these days of chat rooms, fora, IM, etc., anyone with a little creativity and determination should be able to scare up some long-distance action. Consensually, I mean. Sure, you wouldn't want to ask most of these phantom partners why hot teenage girls like themselves would find themselves alone, horny, and available to chat with a loser like yourself on a Saturday night, but really, we can't afford to be too picky here. Unless your motivation really is the sort of half-evil, half-pathetic phone-rape we were talking about above, anyone with an Internet connection and a good line of patter should suffice. In the meantime — hey, wanker, leave those kids alone.

Love,
Andrea

(Fun fact: According to the 1990 Census, Wanker is the 53,492nd most common surname in the United States.)

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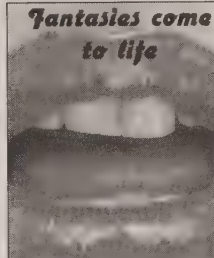
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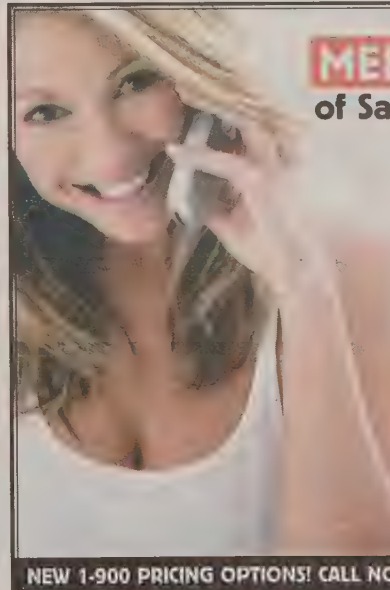
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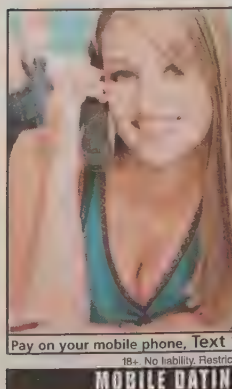
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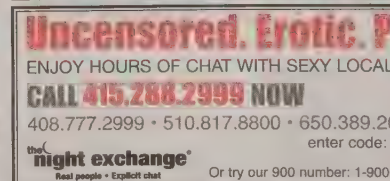
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FICTITIOUS BUSINESS NAME STATEMENT FILE NO. A0293080-00 The following person is doing business as **BUCKHORN GRILL**. 845 Market Street, San Francisco, CA 94103; PICKAPPLE, LLC, 10 Main Street, San Francisco, CA 95694. This business is conducted by a limited liability company. Registrant commenced business under the above-listed fictitious business name on the date n/a. Signed James Apple, President. This statement was filed with the County Clerk of the City and County of San Francisco, CA by M. Lucas Rebston on March 31, 2006. **April 5, 12, 19, 26, 2006. L#402702**

FICTITIOUS BUSINESS NAME STATEMENT FILE NO. A0293079-00 The following person is doing business as **BUCKHORN GRILL**. 4 Embarcadero Cntr., San Francisco, CA 94111; PICKAPPLE, LLC, 10 Main Street, San Francisco, CA 95694. This business is conducted by a limited liability company. Registrant commenced business under the above-listed fictitious business name on the date n/a. Signed James Apple, President. This statement was filed with the County Clerk of the City and County of San Francisco, CA by M. Lucas Rebston on March 31, 2006. **April 5, 12, 19, 26, 2006. L#402703**

FICTITIOUS BUSINESS NAME STATEMENT FILE NO. A0292691-00 The following person is doing business as **ELENEY ELECTRIC**. 610 Cole Street, San Francisco, CA 94117; Fearghal Mc Eleney, 610 Cole Street, San Francisco, CA 94117. This business is conducted by an individual. Registrant commenced business under the above-listed fictitious business name on the date 03/10/06. Signed Fearghal Mc Eleney. This statement was filed with the County Clerk of the City and County of San Francisco, CA by Magdalena Zevallos on March 16, 2006. **April 5, 12, 19, 26, 2006. L#402701**

FICTITIOUS BUSINESS NAME STATEMENT FILE NO. A0293272-00 The following person is doing business as **OLAY SPA**. 815 Hyde St., San Francisco, CA 94109; Juan Chen, 161 Park Plaza Dr. #23, Daly City, CA 94015. This business is conducted by an individual. Registrant commenced business under the above-listed fictitious business name on the date n/a. Signed Juan Chen. This statement was filed with the County Clerk of the City and County of San Francisco, CA by Manbel Jaldon on April 7, 2006. **April 12, 19, 26, 2006. L#402805**

FICTITIOUS BUSINESS NAME STATEMENT FILE NO. A0293013-00 The following person is doing business as **#1 ONLY HALF BOTTLES OF WINE.COM #2 HALF WINE WINES.COM #3 HALF WIT WINES.COM #4 HALF WIT WINES.COM #5 ONLY HALF BOTTLES OF CHAMPAGNE.COM**. 830 El Camino Del Mar, San Francisco, CA 94121; DEL MAR INTERNATIONAL, INC. ORGANIZED IN THE STATE OF CALIFORNIA, 830 El Camino Del Mar, San Francisco, CA 94121. This business is conducted by a corporation. Registrant commenced business under the above-listed fictitious business name on the date N/A. Signed Gordon Uhlmann. This statement was filed with the County Clerk of the City and County of San Francisco, CA by Margaret Tseng on March 29, 2006. **April 12, 19, 26, May 3, 2006. L#402806**

FICTITIOUS BUSINESS NAME STATEMENT FILE NO. A0292667-00 The following person is doing business as **LYUBA**. 2821 Cabrio St., San Francisco, CA 94121; Lyubov Traub, 51 Zita Manor, Daly City, CA 94015. This business is conducted by a limited liability company. Registrant commenced business under the above-listed fictitious business name on the date 3/15/06. Signed Lyubov Traub. This statement was filed with the County Clerk of the City and County of San Francisco, CA by Manbel Jaldon on March 15, 2006. **April 12, 19, 26, May 3, 2006. L#402807**

FICTITIOUS BUSINESS NAME STATEMENT FILE NO. A0293231-00 The following person is doing business as **FARMER BROWN**. 25 Mason St., San Francisco, CA 94103; BLACK RABBIT HOSPITALITY, INC. (CA), 3015 E. Bayshore Rd. #184, Redwood City, CA 94063. This business is conducted by a corporation. Registrant commenced business under the above-listed fictitious business name on the date 4/1/06. Signed Glenn Lodet, CEO. This statement was filed with the County Clerk of the City and County of San Francisco, CA by Manbel Jaldon on April 5, 2006. **April 12, 19, 26, May 3, 2006. L#402809**

FICTITIOUS BUSINESS NAME STATEMENT FILE NO. A0292599-00 The following person is doing business as **CAF... IL LATTE (RED WINDOW CAF...)**, 754 Post St., San Francisco, CA 94109; Kerry L., 378 N. Delaware St., San Mateo, CA 94401. This business is conducted by an individual. Registrant commenced business under the above-listed fictitious business name on the date 3/13/06. Signed Kerry L. Chan. This statement was filed with the County Clerk of the City and County of San Francisco, CA by M. Lucas Rebston on March 13, 2006. **April 12, 19, 26, May 3, 2006. L#402810**

FICTITIOUS BUSINESS NAME STATEMENT FILE NO. A0293439-00 The following person is doing business as **LAZARUS HOUSE HEALING BY FAITH MINISTRY**. 5 Cameron Way, San Francisco, CA 94124; Stephanie Hughes, 5 Cameron Way, San Francisco, CA 94124. This business is conducted by an individual. Registrant commenced business under the above-listed fictitious business name on the date 4/13/06. Signed STEPHANIE HUGHES. This statement was filed with the County Clerk of the City and County of San Francisco, CA by Jennifer Venegas on April 13, 2006. **April 19, 26, May 3, 10, 2006. L#402904**

FICTITIOUS BUSINESS NAME STATEMENT FILE NO. A0293442-00 The following person is doing business as **GOLDEN GATE CONNECTION INC.**, 20 Chenery Street, San Francisco, CA 94131; Golden Gate Connection Inc., 20 Chenery Street, San Francisco, CA 94131. This business is conducted by a corporation. Registrant commenced business under the above-listed fictitious business name on the date 4/13/06. Signed TANIA SHERLOCK. This statement was filed with the County Clerk of the City and County of San Francisco, CA by M. Lucas Rebston on April 13, 2006. **April 19, 26, May 3, 10, 2006. L#402908**

FICTITIOUS BUSINESS NAME STATEMENT FILE NO. A0293614-00 The following person is doing business as **JAMA DESIGNS**. 5138 Sornimds Loop, San Francisco, CA 94129; Mary K. Austin, 5138 Sornimds Loop, San Francisco, CA 94129. This business is conducted by a individual. Registrant commenced business under the above-listed fictitious business name on the date 4/17/06. Signed Mary Austin. This statement was filed with the County Clerk of the City and County of San Francisco, CA by Margaret Tseng on April 19, 2006. **April 26, May 3, 10, 17, 2006. L#403001**

NOTICE OF APPLICATION FOR CHANGE IN OWNERSHIP OF ALCOHOLIC BEVERAGE LICENSE To Whom It May Concern: The name of the applicant is: MSB 1689 ENTERPRISES INC. The applicant listed above are applying to The Department of Alcoholic Beverage Control to sell alcoholic beverages at: 1689 Church St., San Francisco, CA 94131. Type of license: Applied for: 41 - ON-SALE BEER AND WINE EATING PLACE. **April 12, 19, 26, 2006. L#402803**

NOTICE OF APPLICATION FOR CHANGE IN OWNERSHIP OF ALCOHOLIC BEVERAGE LICENSE To Whom It May Concern: The name of the applicant is: BARSOITI BROTHERS INCORPORATED. The applicant listed above are applying to The Department of Alcoholic Beverage Control to sell alcoholic beverages at: #1 Ferry Building, San Francisco, CA 94111. Type of license applied for: 41 - ON-SALE BEER AND WINE EATING PLACE. **April 19, 26, May 3, 2006. L#402905**

NOTICE OF APPLICATION FOR CHANGE IN OWNERSHIP OF ALCOHOLIC BEVERAGE LICENSE To Whom It May Concern: The name of the applicant is: BC RESTAURANTS LLC. The applicant listed above are applying to The Department of Alcoholic Beverage Control to sell alcoholic beverages at: 420-424 Clay St., San Francisco, CA 94111. Type of license Applied for: 47 - ON-SALE GENERAL EATING PLACE. **April 5, 12, 19, 26, 2006. L#402704**

NOTICE OF APPLICATION FOR CHANGE IN OWNERSHIP OF ALCOHOLIC BEVERAGE LICENSE To Whom It May Concern: The name of the applicant is: UNX ENTERPRISES LLC. The applicant listed above are applying to The Department of Alcoholic Beverage Control to sell alcoholic beverages at: 800 Post St., San Francisco, CA 94109. Type of license Applied for: 41 - ON-SALE BEER AND WINE EATING PLACE. **April 26, May 3, 10, 17, 2006. L#403004**

ORDER TO SHOW CAUSE FOR CHANGE OF NAME AND GENDER CASE NUMBER, CNC - 06542882 SUPERIOR COURT OF CALIFORNIA, COUNTY OF SAN FRANCISCO, 400 McAllister St., San Francisco, CA 94102-4514. PETITION OF STEPHEN V. CARTA, TO ALL INTERESTED PERSONS STEPHEN V. CARTA, filed a petition with this court for a decree changing petitioner's name to (proposed name): VICTORIA OLE. CARTA. Petitioner has also filed a petition for a decree changing petitioner's gender from male to female and for the issuance of a new birth certificate reflecting the gender and name changes. THE COURT ORDERS that all persons interested in said matter shall appear before this court at the hearing indicated below to show cause, if any why the petition for change of name should not be granted. **NOTICE OF HEARING DATE: June 8, 2006, 9:00 AM room 218.** Dated April 4, 2006. Endorsed Filed, San Francisco County Superior Court on April 4, 2006 by Gordon Park L., Clerk by Deborah Steppo, Deputy Clerk. Signed Robert L. Dondero, Judge of the Superior Court on April 4, 2006. **April 19, 26, May 3, 10, 2006. L#402901**

ORDER TO SHOW CAUSE FOR CHANGE OF NAME AND GENDER CASE NUMBER: CNC - 06542366 SUPERIOR COURT OF CALIFORNIA, COUNTY OF SAN FRANCISCO, 400 McAllister St., San Francisco, CA 94102-4514. PETITION OF BYRON PHILIP HALETSKY, TO ALL INTERESTED PERSONS: BYRON PHILIP HALETSKY, filed a petition with this court for a decree changing petitioner's name to (proposed name): ALESIA TONYA PHILIPS. Petitioner has also filed a petition for a decree changing petitioner's gender from male to female and for the issuance of a new birth certificate reflecting the gender and name changes. THE COURT ORDERS that all persons interested in said matter shall appear before this court at the hearing indicated below to show cause, if any why the petition for change of name should not be granted. **NOTICE OF HEARING DATE: May 30, 2006, Time: 9:00 AM room-218.** Dated April 4, 2006. Endorsed Filed, San Francisco County Superior Court on April 4, 2006 by Gordon Park L., Clerk by Jun P. Pano, Deputy Clerk. Signed Robert L. Dondero, Judge of the Superior Court on April 4, 2006. **April 19, 26, May 3, 10, 2006. L#402903**

ORDER TO SHOW CAUSE FOR CHANGE OF NAME AND GENDER CASE NUMBER CNC - 06542868 SUPERIOR COURT OF CALIFORNIA, COUNTY OF SAN FRANCISCO, 400 McAllister St., San Francisco, CA 94102-4514. PETITION OF LAUREN AILENE SCOTT, TO ALL INTERESTED PERSONS: LAUREN AILENE SCOTT, filed a petition with this court for a decree changing petitioner's name to (proposed name): LOREN AIDEN SCOTT. THE COURT ORDERS that all persons interested in said matter shall appear before this court at the hearing indicated below to show cause, if any why the petition for change of name should not be granted. **NOTICE OF HEARING DATE: June 15, 2006, Time: 9:00 AM room 218.** Dated April 5, 2006. Endorsed Filed, San Francisco County Superior Court on April 5, 2006 by Gordon Park L., Clerk by Deborah Steppo, Deputy Clerk. Signed Robert L. Dondero, Judge of the Superior Court on April 5, 2006. **April 19, 26, May 3, 10, 2006. L#402902**

ORDER TO SHOW CAUSE FOR CHANGE OF NAME AND GENDER CASE NUMBER: CNC - 06542882 SUPERIOR COURT OF CALIFORNIA, COUNTY OF SAN FRANCISCO, 400 McAllister St., San Francisco, CA 94102-4514. PETITION OF RICARDO CASILLAS GOMEZ, TO ALL INTERESTED PERSONS: RICARDO CASILLAS GOMEZ, filed a petition with this court for a decree changing petitioner's name to (proposed name): YAHIRIA CASILLAS GOMEZ. Petitioner has also filed a petition for a decree changing petitioner's gender from male to female and for the issuance of a new birth certificate reflecting the gender and name changes. THE COURT ORDERS that all persons interested in said matter shall appear before this court at the hearing indicated below to show cause, if any why the petition for change of name should not be granted. **NOTICE OF HEARING DATE: June 6, 2006, Time: 9:00 AM room-218.** Dated April 12, 2006. Endorsed Filed, San Francisco County Superior Court on April 12, 2006. **April 26, May 3, 10, 17, 2006. L#403003**

ORDER TO SHOW CAUSE FOR CHANGE OF NAME Endorsed FILED San Francisco County Superior Court, April 18, 2006 by Gordon Park L., Clerk. CASE NUMBER: CNC - 06542907 SUPERIOR COURT OF CALIFORNIA, COUNTY OF SAN FRANCISCO SUPERIOR COURT, 400 McAllister Street, room 103, San Francisco, CA 94102. PETITIONS OF GINA T. GUIRON for Change of name. TO ALL INTERESTED PERSONS: GINA T. GUIRON filed a petition with this court for a decree changing names as follows: present names GINA T. GUIRON to proposed names G. MAKANI YOSHIZAWA. THE COURT ORDERS that all persons interested in said matter shall appear before this court at the hearing indicated below to show cause, if any why the petition for change of name should not be granted. **NOTICE OF HEARING DATE: 6/22/06 Time: 9:00 AM room-218.** Dated April 18, 2006 by Robert L. Dondero, Presiding Judge. **April 26, May 3, 10, 17, 2006. L#403002**

STATEMENT OF ABANDONMENT OF LIFE OF FICTITIOUS BUSINESS NAME The following person has abandoned the use of the fictitious business name known as: OLAY SPA Located at: 815 Hyde St., San Francisco, CA 94109. The fictitious business name referred to above was filed in the County of San Francisco under File# A 0291326-00 on 1/23/06. NAME AND ADDRESS OF REGISTRANTS (as shown on previous statement): YANSI WU, 1354 Powell St. #318, San Francisco, CA 94133. This business was conducted by a general partnership. Signed JUAN CHEN. Dated April 7, 2006, by Manbel Jaldon, Deputy County Clerk. **April 12, 19, 26, May 3, 2006. L#402804**

STATEMENT OF ABANDONMENT OF USE OF FICTITIOUS BUSINESS NAME The following person has abandoned the use of the fictitious business name known as: BAY AREA ATTENDANT & SECRETARIAL SERVICES Located at: 3288 21st St. #29, San Francisco, CA 94110. The fictitious business name referred to above was filed in the County of San Francisco under File# 2004-0281094-30 on 12/1/04. NAME AND ADDRESS OF REGISTRANTS (as shown on previous statement): TERI ANGST, 3288 21st St. #29, San Francisco, CA 94110. This business was conducted by an individual. Signed TERI ANGST. Dated: April 6, 2006, by Margaret Tseng, Deputy County Clerk. **April 19, 26, May 3, 10, 2006. L#402809**

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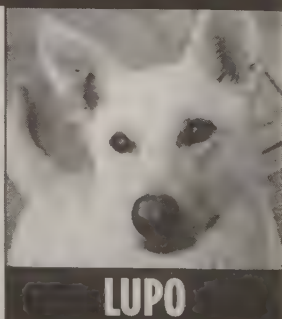
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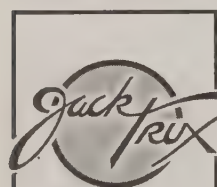
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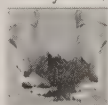
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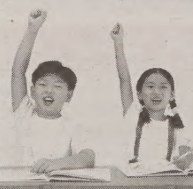
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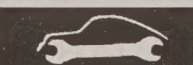
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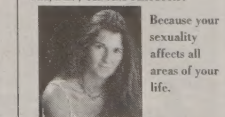
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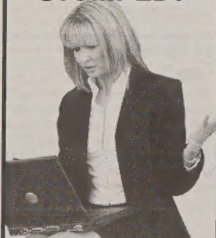
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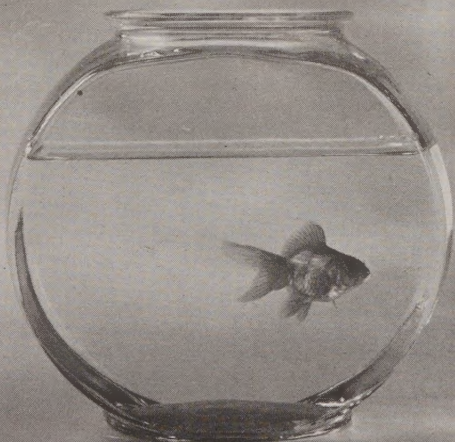
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